BERNARD NEWMAN

ROUND ABOUT ANDORRA

Illustrated by C. HENLEY GARDENER

A sympathetically written and graphic description of one of the most romantic states in Europe. A remnant of feudal days, the pseudo-republic of Andorra is hidden among the wildest mountains of the Pyrenees. The author tells of its unique history of its primitive people, and of its gaunt valleys. Interesting sidelights are thrown on one of the staple industries—smuggling. The scope of the book includes French and Spanish Catalonia, and Mr. Newman gives an account of the causes of the present Catalan unrest. In lighter vein, he describes many incidents of his sojourn among this likeable people. The book is well illustrated by nearly forty black-and-white drawings by Mr. C. Henley Gardener, and is the first really comprehensive description of Andorra and its environs to be placed before the public.

O.P. sent to R.R.L. 9/26/34

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ROUND ABOUT ANDORRA

ESCALDAS

BERNARD NEWMAN

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Illustrated by
C. HENLEY GARDENER

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1928

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Printed in Great Britain by
Unwin Brothers, Ltd., Woking

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ROUND ABOUT ANDORRA

CHAPTER I

THE VALLEYS OF ANDORRA

Ask the next dozen people you meet to give you an idea of the whereabouts of Andorra, and tabulate the replies.

Not very long ago I visited a populous London suburb to deliver a lecture to the local Literary Society. My chairman introduced me with the usual flow of extravagant compliments—culled from the Press notices in my lecture prospectus—and then went on to say: "I am sure that we shall have an interesting evening, because the subject is so very attractive. Personally, I have followed the course of events in *Turkey* with very great interest——" Hastily I scribbled a note, "Andorra, not Angora," and placed it on the table before him. He reversed very neatly.

Andorra is a tiny, independent republic in the Pyrenees, between France and Spain, about sixty miles from the Mediterranean end of the chain. The country consists of a small group of narrow valleys almost entirely on the Spanish side of the water-shed. The Andorrans are a Catalan tribe, and the principal occupations are agriculture and smuggling. There are only two roads in the whole country, and the most usual form of transport

is by the back of mule or man. The State measures about twenty miles from north to south and eighteen from east to west. While enjoying virtual independence, Andorra pays annually a small nominal feudal tribute of 960 francs to France and 460 francs to the Bishop of Urgel, in Spain.

These are the elementary facts about Andorra. Such a description, together with details of means of access and of accommodation, is to be found in any guide-book or encyclopædia. But Andorra is not the kind of country that can be adequately described in a work of reference. It has no Gothic cathedrals, or Roman remains, or beds wherein Queen Elizabeth once slept. There is very little to be seen in Andorra by the man who looks out on the world through tourist spectacles. The scenery is magnificent, but no better than that of other Pyrenean valleys. The villages are quaint, but no more quaint than a hundred others much easier of access. The accommodation is generally bad, but not worse than that in most villages on the Spanish side. Yet there is much in Andorra that makes it one of the most attractive of the smaller European States. Its history is unique; it is the only country in the world which has lived under exactly the same form of government for over a thousand years. And the Andorran people are something more than a Catalan tribe: the years move on, but not in Andorra. Change is almost unknown there: "civilization" only exists in an elementary fashion. It is very easy to visualize the mediæval State after a visit to Andorra, for Andorra is mediæval in all its essentials.

People visit foreign countries on varying impulses.

Some go because fashion decrees that " the best people " shall go to the artificial Deauville for a certain three weeks, and to the unhealthy Lido at another time. These people we may ignore, since assuredly they will never go to Andorra. There are other people who go to see what other countries have to show—usually in the form of monuments, pictures, and cities. Nor are these likely to visit Andorra, for the monuments and pictures of the country can be exhausted in about twenty minutes, and of cities there are none. Other people go abroad to see the scenery ; one or two of these stray into Andorra by accident, but Andorra cannot pretend to compare with Gavarnie, to quote but one example. But there are a few people whose chief delight in visiting foreign lands is to study the folk who live there. This is by far the most fascinating object. Deauville and the Lido soon become a bore ; cold monuments are not so romantic as the stories that surround them ; scenery is seldom as magnificent as the pictures would have us believe; but the people of a country never disappoint. The people of Andorra will repay study with a wonderful interest. Not that they are an easy people to study. They are not used to strangers, and take time before reaching familiar terms. They wear neither their hearts nor their characters on their sleeves ; but they reveal themselves as intelligent and lovable on deeper observation. In many respects they resemble the Highlanders of northern Scotland.

The Andorran is a simple-minded being, superstitious and slow to move. His imagination is not quick or extravagant, and his beliefs are such as have been

handed down by his forefathers. The fact that his father did a thing is good enough reason why he should do it. Logical argument may leave him cold ; he is true to the traditions of his race. Even his laws are unwritten, in the main, and are passed on from generation to generation. His national literature and music take the form of legends and folk-songs and dance airs. Many of the folk-songs are common to other Pyrenean valleys, but most of the legends are local.

Some day I may try to collect all the legends of Andorra ; they would make a very fascinating selection. And they are real legends ; they have been passed on for a hundred generations. Too many " legends " are written for the benefit of the American tourist. I believe that the law of supply and demand is discredited by some modern economists, but it seems to apply in this instance. The Americans come over to Europe for " culture " and the tourist agencies see that they get it. I must plead guilty to aiding and abetting in one small instance ; maybe I have founded a new profession.

I was sitting one day in a shady corner of an old-English ruin—a show-place of world fame. Half asleep, I saw two American ladies approaching, accompanied by the official guide. I heard him commence his rigmarole : " This 'ere castle were founded in 1184 by 'Enry, Hearl of Hessex. On my right is the Red Tower, which were built fifty years later——" and so on. I smiled feebly and relapsed into semi-consciousness. Half an hour later the party returned, the tour being completed. One of the ladies had evidently been making copious notes of the history of the castle. " Yes, that's all there

is to see," the guide concluded, his palm itching. "Thank you very much," said one of the ladies; "but you haven't told us the legend." The guide looked blank and crestfallen. "This 'ere castle were founded in 1184 by 'Enry, Hearl of Hessex——" he commenced mechanically. "Yes, I've got all that," the lady broke in. "Now I want the legend." The guide murmured something about there being no legend. The lady insisted that such a castle could not exist without a legend. But the guide grew positive. There was a keep and a drawbridge, he said, but no legend; he doubted if there had ever been a legend; if there had been, it must have been destroyed or crumbled into ruins.

I was touched by the look of dismay on the faces of the ladies. After all, they had crossed the Atlantic in search of legends and such-like things, and it seemed a pity to disappoint them. I made my way to them and explained that the guide was mistaken. The castle, of course, had a legend. The ladies assured me that they were sure of this: Could I tell it to them? I agreed. I did my best. I do not claim that it was a first-class legend, but it was the best I could do at such short notice. I brought it up to date by means of the ghost of the White Lady and the Haunted Chamber. I pointed out the spot where the Lady Isabella cast herself from the battlements—the guide listened open-mouthed. One of the ladies took a snap of the spot. Both were highly pleased with the legend: they thanked me profusely and moved awkwardly away, wondering whether they ought to tip me.

A year or two later I revisited the castle. The guide

recognized me and greeted me with deferential effusion. I joined the party he was taking round. To my surprise I found that he had inculcated my legend into his recital. He pointed out the fateful spot on the battlements, and twenty Kodaks clicked simultaneously. After he had reaped a very rich harvest I had a few words with him. His gratitude was sincere; he declared that my legend was the best thing he had ever struck. Then, hesitatingly, he put forward a request. He had a cousin who was a guide at a famous abbey in Yorkshire. Would I write a legend for the cousin? It would make such a lot of difference to him, and it would not take me long. But I refused. I had already perceived that my conduct was infamous. The story I had intended for the entertainment of two strangers was now being passed off as history! My only consolation is that I am by no means alone in my crime.

The incident was recalled recently by another strange request. I have been in the habit of writing songs for music-hall singers. It is a bad habit, but one must live. One of my clients called my attention to the revival in popularity of folk-songs, and asked me to write him an "old-English folk-song, with good point lines and plenty of 'gags.'" As a set-off to my other offence, let it be said to my credit that I declined the request with its consequent guineas.

But this has little to do with Andorra, except to emphasize that the local legends are the genuine article. The American tourist has not yet invaded Andorra, for he seldom ventures farther south than Carcassonne. I do not mean to say, of course, that Americans have not

visited Andorra. Probably a dozen or more go there every year, but they are not of the tourist type. The American is one of the most delightful persons in the world, but most visitors to Europe are in too much of a hurry to exhibit their true selves.

The geographical character of the Andorran valleys lends itself to legend. Every peak, every crag, sometimes every tree, has its name, and often a little story is wound about it. Every name in Andorra gives the clue to a story. The origin of the word "Andorra" is shrouded in mystery, but the popular account is legendary. "Wild valleys of Hell," cried Louis le Debonnaire, after defeating the Moors, "I christen you 'Endor.'" Hence, say the natives, was derived the word Andorra. Unfortunately, modern historians discredit this story. It is claimed that the word is an adaptation of the Moorish "Aldarra," meaning forests. At the time of the Moorish invasion, the Andorran valleys were heavily wooded. The word "Andorra" is found in other parts of Spain which were previously under Moorish domination and which were formerly forest regions. This is fairly good circumstantial evidence.

One account of the derivation of the name deserves attention because of its ingenuity. The Spanish *Andar*—to walk—is supposed to supply the governing prefix of the word Andorrisoe, a nomad tribe mentioned by Pliny. According to Pliny, this tribe lived in the vicinity of Cadiz, but at a later date it suddenly disappeared from the neighbourhood. It has been suggested that the Andorrisoe migrated to the bleak valleys now known

as Andorra. Unfortunately, there is no particle of evidence to prove this or even to suggest a motive for such a remarkable change of habitation. Relevant negative information is to be found in the fact that at no time in their known history have the Andorrans shown the slightest trace of nomadic instincts.

The laws of probability would seem to indicate that the name of the country was derived from the archaic and almost universal word " Endor." Whether the valleys were actually christened by Louis le Debonnaire is quite another matter. But throughout all known periods of history it has been usual to connect wild and desolate mountains with Hell and the Devil. Throughout the Pyrenees there are a dozen heights whose names bear relation to one or the other. Germany can supply a hundred examples. Since the Andorran mountains are among the wildest of the Pyrenees, it is not surprising that old-time superstition connected them with Endor. Primitive visitors from the plains would naturally attribute the wild winds which sweep down the valleys to supernatural causes ; the lairs of wolves and bears would assist in making the valleys appear uninviting to humans. So it is exceedingly probable that it is from the word " Endor " that Andorra took its name. The old word slightly modified still exists within Andorran borders. The shaggy forest mass which rises to the north of Soldeu is called the " Bosch d'Entor."

Although Andorra is approximately equivalent in size to the Isle of Wight, its present population of six thousand souls is the maximum that the land can sustain. This reflects no discredit on the fertility of the soil ;

the mountainous nature of the republic makes it impossible to put under cultivation more than a small fraction of the land area. Andorra consists of three main valleys in a Y-shaped formation. The upper arms of the letter are formed by the rivers Valira del Norte and Valira del Oriente, which join near the capital to flow southwards into Spain. The width of the valleys varies. Sometimes it is only a few yards; it never exceeds three or four miles. Tiny mountain streams join the rivers at frequent intervals, and their miniature valleys sometimes provide a few additional and invaluable acres. Every yard of available land is intensively cultivated. The mountain-sides are terraced—when they do not happen to consist of solid rock. The houses of a village huddle together so as to occupy the minimum of space. Small wonder that land is wealth in Andorra!

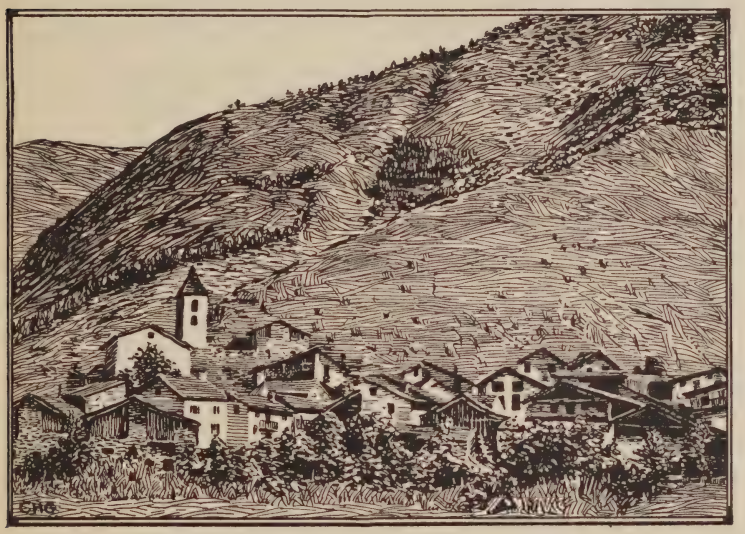
The mountains of Andorra are among the wildest of the Pyrenean chain. On the western side are the outlying heights of the massive Maladetta group. The mean altitude of the whole republic is well over 6,000 feet. The northern valleys are completely snowed up for several months in the year, and the inhabitants hibernate. In the summer the climate is mild—even hot, for the major part of Andorra lies on the southern slope of the range.

Even within so small a compass is to be found mountain scenery of every type. To the east, around Soldeu, is a group of grass-covered heights which are a national grazing-ground for cattle, mules, and horses. Farther to the west are great untrodden forests, wild and rugged. But to the extreme west the mountains are grey and

gaunt; for miles not a vestige of green is to be seen. You may stand on a peak and see no sign of life on your horizon. Yet it is among these peaks that the remnants of the old wild life of the Pyrenees still flourish. Here are the dens of bears, the lairs of wolves, and the nests of eagles and vultures. You are not likely to find them in the summer, since their owners migrate to the west. But in the winter they are still unwelcome visitors. An old man at Massana showed me with pride the skin of a bear which his son had killed. But within a few more generations the bear and the wolf will be extinct in the Pyrenees. A rumour is sufficient to set a whole village on the hunting-path, and a raid on a flock is never left unavenged.

The eastern valley usually escapes from the attention of such intruders. The wild natives there are confined to the more homely fox and marten, wild ducks and geese, rabbits and hares, and the dainty izard—the Pyrenean chamois. Here, too, the birds are more plentiful, since vegetation flourishes more freely. Once upon a time all Andorra was well wooded. Now such a scanty supply of accessible timber remains as to cause some anxiety. For Andorra has iron in its mountains—good ore, ready for the smelting. For centuries the Andorran forges were famous throughout northern Spain. But even before the development of the coal-fields the native industry of Andorra had declined through lack of fuel. And now worked iron is imported from Spain. The ore remains in the mountains—there is enough iron in Andorra to make a steel band round the earth.

The western mountains of Andorra are wild. Their shaggy stone sides have been unmoved by climatic vagaries, and the absolute silence completes the impression of wildness. I wandered one day along a little valley close by Ordino. I left the stream to climb a peak, where I could get a glimpse of the Maladetta group.



ORDINO

The silence was eerie; there was a wind, but it made no sound, since there were no trees to bar its progress. I strained my ears to catch the note of a bird; but why should a bird visit such an inhospitable region? To the east the crickets sing and the lizards run across your path, but they do not venture here. In the whole of my day's journey I saw but one sign of animal life—a brown viper asleep on a sun-baked rock.

Geologists tell us that Andorra is composed of ancient earths. I can believe it. An amateur can show with confidence where a glacier once crept down the valley; there are still to be seen huge boulders and rocks which it left in its path. Freely scattered over the valley you will find them, where they have lain for countless centuries. Sometimes the men of Andorra have tried to clear away the remnants of the moraines; but the stones are often like icebergs, and only a small part of their bulk appears above the surface.

You would not call Andorra a pretty country. Its mountains are fearful monsters rather than the friendly hills of Wales. Wild gales sweep down the valleys and fierce storms approach without warning. Nature shows no mercy in Andorra. Only a hardy race could survive there. You must have no nerves as you travel about Andorra. You must have no lack of determination if you would live there and drag the means of existence from the unwilling soil. Andorra frowns on all strangers —except those who have courage. And even a mountain will admit itself beaten by courage.

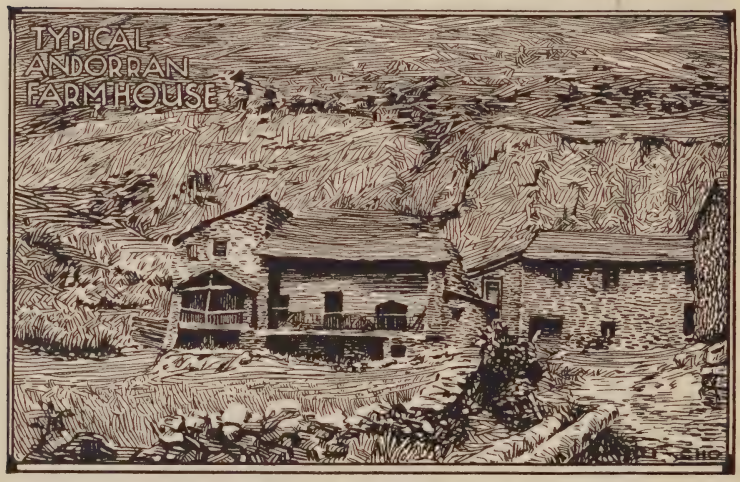
We in England set a greater store by moral courage than by physical courage—rightly, I think. The coward who determines to fight is a brave man. But in Andorra minds are in a mediæval state. Physical courage is there the greatest of virtues. Did you wish to make an immediate entry into the heart of the Andorran, then show your courage in a way he understands. What matters it to him if you have fought in a battle? He has no shadow of conception of what the battle is like. But if you can attack and conquer an impossible peak, then you are

entered on his list of heroes. Do not let this tempt you to foolhardy deeds. The mountains of Andorra are not for tyros. You must keep to beaten tracks unless you are more than an amateur. It is very easy to lose your way and your life in Andorra.

The people of Andorra fit the country. The Catalans are at home in the Pyrenees as are the Dutch in the polders. And the Andorrans are the essence of all that is Catalan. In them you see to-day the Catalan of five hundred years ago. But the fascination of Andorra is in more than this. You can see there a race that was utterly untouched and unspoiled by civilization until the earlier years of the present century. You can see there a State which is still on mediæval lines—a solitary relic of feudal days. Read later of the history of Andorra, and you will understand the charm of the land. The centuries beckon to you as you pass by; the solidity of unchanged age balances your mind. But, where modern ideas have crept in, the resultant incongruities make you either weep or howl with exasperated laughter.

Much can be written about Andorra. Yet you cannot study Andorra by studying Andorra alone. Who can know anything of English history without reading that of Europe also? And the case in point is sharper, since the Andorrans are but a tribe of the Catalan race—a race which still flourishes about them. From the Catalan stock Andorra drew and maintained its independent ideas; to the main Catalan race Andorra still looks for its culture. That is why we must look Round About Andorra, that our view of the centre-piece may be clearer.

I do not propose to waste my time and yours by painting elaborate word-pictures of sights and scenery. Such were popular and necessary fifty years ago, but modern generations have developed the power of visualization. Probably the cinema has helped. So that when I say, for example, that an Andorran house is built against a background of solid rock, like a plain,



lean-to shanty of grey stone, I know that my readers can conjure up the necessary vision without my describing every stone of the house. Nor will I weary you with a topographical survey—a brief glance at the rough sketch-map which I have prepared will indicate the real essentials. And when I speak of towns on the beaten track, I deliberately omit the information which you may find in works of reference or guide-books. What, then, must we tell, that we may know something of

Andorra? First we must speak very briefly of the few villages of the tiny State, and particularly of the capital. At greater length we must develop the history of the republic; not only is this essential to an understanding of Andorra, but it is a fascinating story. We must also examine the economic and political conditions under which the people live. And assuredly we must tell as much as possible about the people of Andorra—their lives, characters, and occupations. A chapter on the ways into Andorra is a natural corollary to a description of its valleys, and may prove of particular value to anyone who may wish to hazard the journey. Then we must cast about. Of two towns we must tell. First, Seo de Urgel—but a few miles over the Andorran frontier into Spain. For ten centuries Seo de Urgel has dominated Andorra; its bishop is one of Andorra's feudal overlords; it is the only "civilized" city within reach of the mountain State. Second, Barcelona—the headquarters of the Catalan race, whence Andorra has always drawn its inspiration and its culture. And, finally, we must ramble around Catalonia and see something of that territory inhabited by the brothers of the Andorran. Our view shall be casual rather than formal; this is no text-book. No one book can completely exhaust any one subject; the ultimate effect of such a book as this ought to be a stimulated desire for further knowledge of the subject.

As I mention the valleys of Andorra, cast a glance at my rough map from time to time. Then I need waste no time in describing minutely their position.

There are but six villages in the valleys of Andorra:

CANILLO

Canillo; Encamp; Massana; Ordino; St. Julian de Loria; and the capital, Andorra the Old. The exact name of the latter village is given variously as Andorra-la-Viella, Andorra-la-Vieja, or Andorra-Vella—the differences illustrating the variations between Catalan-French, Catalan-Spanish, and Catalan proper. The capital houses almost one-eighth of the entire population. The next largest village is Canillo, with six hundred inhabitants. Canillo is situated at an altitude of well over five thousand feet, and is one of the highest villages in the Pyrenees. For four or five months in the year it is completely snowed up, and the people assume habits of hibernation. In the summer Canillo is a pleasant place. Crowded under the terraced mountains in the narrow valley of the Valira del Oriente it does not suffer from the intense heat of the southern valleys.

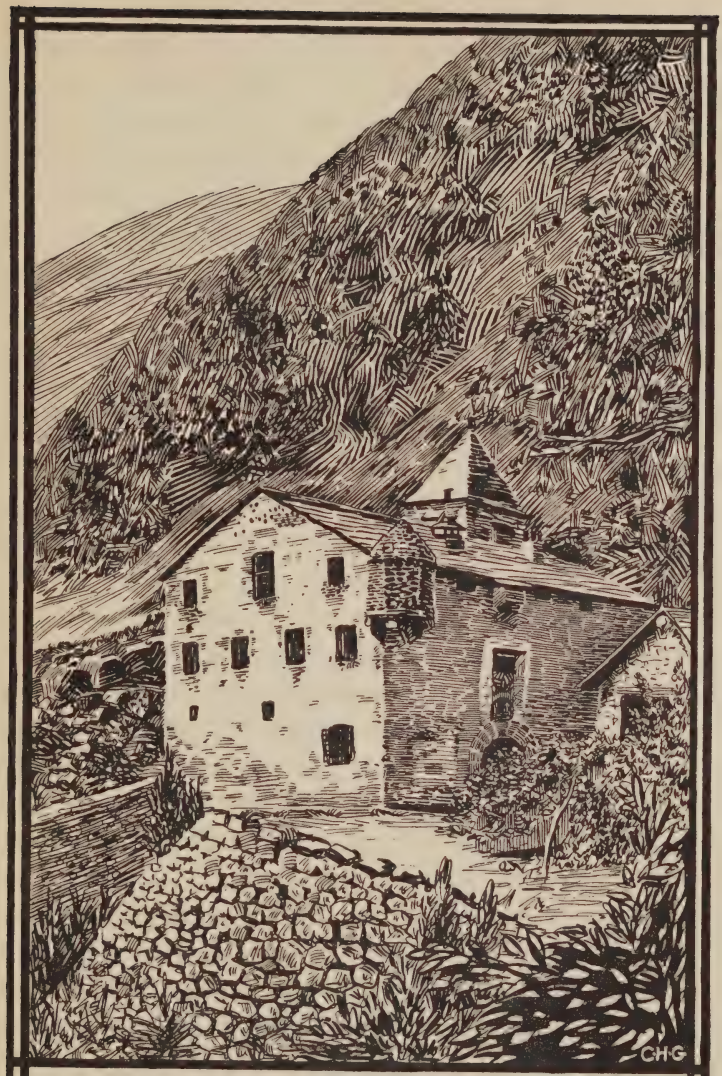
A few miles lower down the river the valley broadens, and Encamp is snugly ensconced in its midst. One Andorran village is very like another, just as one house is like its neighbour. The Andorran houses are essentially built to last. Most of them are centuries old, with stone walls a foot thick. The ground-floor is usually occupied by the live stock, and the human inhabitants use the first and second floors. I found in many cases that the back wall of the house was the solid rock of the mountain.

In the corresponding valley of the Valira del Norte are two similar but smaller villages, Ordino and Massana, housing 330 and 160 inhabitants respectively. Each village is the headquarters of a district which includes a number of tiny hamlets.

Near the confluence of the two branches of the Valira stands Andorra the Old, the natural capital of the republic. The village covers only a small area on a diminutive plateau above the river, nestling close to the side of the mountainous masses of the Puig d'Anclar. A more undistinguished capital it would be hard to find. The houses are as closely huddled together as in a London slum. Soil is so precious in Andorra that a minimum area must be covered by buildings.

I made my way through a labyrinth of narrow alleys to the pride of Andorra—the Casa dels Valls, or the House of the Valleys. This is the Parliament House of the republic, and it also serves as a school, court of law, dining-hall, stable, dormitory, and prison. It is the only building of any pretension in the State, and is carefully tended. It is a massive sixteenth-century building, square in shape, and curiously resembling the old-English form of water-mill.

I dispatched a boy to find the *guardia*. A man appeared; and I asked if I might see the interior. He assented politely, but without enthusiasm; for the Andorran does not warm to strangers in an instant. He wore a pair of old trousers and a bright blue shirt —the favourite male attire in these parts. To look at him one would never have guessed that he was a member of Parliament. Producing a huge key, at least eighteen inches long, he opened the massive studded door after a violent struggle. Over the doorway I noticed the coat-of-arms of Andorra—in which the arms of the twin overlords are cunningly intermingled. Above the carving was an inscription in Latin. Roughly trans-



CASA DELS VALLS

lated, it reads like this: "This is the house of the Council and of Justice. Take notice: these are the arms of a neutral valley and of kingdoms which have protected themselves. If each has given happiness to other people, Andorra, how can their alliance fail to give you centuries of prosperity?" Surely this expresses very aptly the unchanging relations of Andorra with France and Spain.

I stepped through the doorway into what was apparently a dark cavern. The floor was of mud made hard by the pressure of innumerable feet. Here was the prison of the State, but it is only used to stable the mules of the councillors who ride in for the meetings. There is another tiny prison in the little square of the town which more than suffices for Andorra's needs. From the ground-floor my guide conducted me to a solid stone staircase, which leads to the most important part of the building. Although I was well acquainted with the history of Andorra and the Casa dels Valls, I plied the *guardia* with innumerable questions with the object of loosening his tongue. I succeeded, and soon he talked freely—in fact, for an Andorran he was positively garrulous. First he showed me the principal chamber—the council-room—a long apartment, austerely furnished with wooden chairs and tables. Only the President's table, by the window at the southern side, could boast a covering of green cloth. Otherwise the table would not have been out of place in the kitchen of an English farmhouse. Around the room ran a row of pegs, from which were suspended the black *gambettos* of the councillors—their cloaks of office—

and also their three-cornered hats. Close by the President's table is a cupboard let into the wall. Above it are painted the words, "ARXIUS Y ESCRIPTURAS DE LAS VALLS DE ANDORRA"—the archives and records of the valley of Andorra. This cupboard is the repository of the Andorran archives. The treaties with France and Spain, with Bishops of Urgel and Counts of Foix, are all deposited here. The cupboard is regarded by the Andorrans as a symbol of their independence—a very logical thought. So intense is the national care for its safe keeping that it has been provided with six locks, and the six keys are distributed among the six parishes. Thus the cupboard can only be unlocked when representatives of all the Andorran parishes are gathered together. My guide gravely explained these safeguards, and he was so intensely serious that I had not the heart to point out to him that any amateur with a jemmy could open the cupboard within two minutes.

I was next introduced to the tocsin, a large bell of vibrant tone which hangs in a corner of the room. Once it used to hang in the tiny buttress on the corner of the Council House, and served to warn Andorra of impending danger. Happily, it was seldom used for this purpose. Now it is relegated to the position of a dinner-gong.

At the back of the council chamber is a door leading into the tiny chapel of St. Ermengol. This is by far the most beautiful and elaborate piece of work in Andorra. There is some mosaic work by local artists, and the colours of the paints used in decoration are not so vivid as in similar chapels in Spain. Although of such small size—it was only built to accommodate a congregation

consisting of the council of twenty-four—its architectural structure gives it a strange sense of dignity. In a corner of Westminster Abbey it would indeed appear crude, but considered as the work of uneducated peasants it is magnificent. I saw my guide's eyes glow with pleasure as he marked my evident approbation.

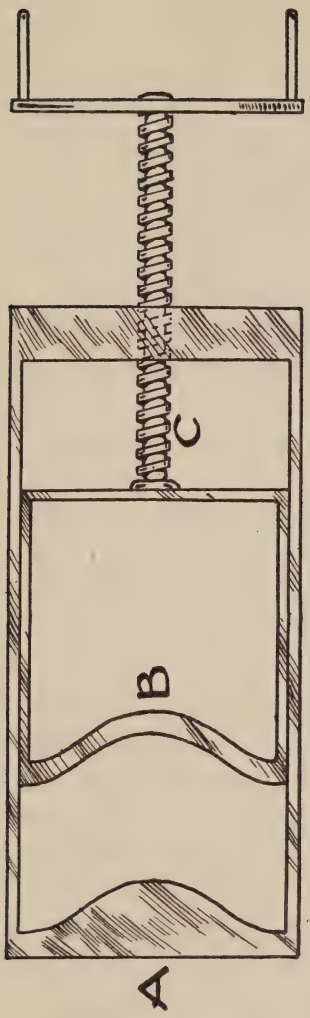
Above the doorway is a picture of the Last Supper, painted by Corot. Art critics say that it is not a good picture, but their word is unheeded in Andorra. In any case, it is so unexpected as to be very welcome. Alongside the picture stands the national flag of Andorra—blue, yellow, and red, with the twin coats-of-arms in the centre.

I have seen many queer things stored in chapels, but in Andorra they think nothing of incongruities.

Were it ever my misfortune to be condemned to death, I would rather that the ceremony took place in any other country than Andorra. The little Pyrenean republic knows nothing of the latest methods of dispatching criminals, and the local procedure leaves much to be desired—particularly from the victim's point of view.

Until recent years the Andorran garrote was seldom displayed to the stranger's view. Now the apparatus may be freely inspected, but no amount of persuasion—financial or otherwise—would induce the *guardia* to permit me to take a photograph. But he could not prevent a rough pencil sketch.

The garrote is about three feet long and eighteen inches broad. Its main feature is a very strong iron frame, the bars of which are quite two inches wide.



THE GARROTE

One end (A) is moulded to the shape of a bow, and through the other end passes a huge screw (C). This propels a smaller but no less substantial frame, which moves in a secure groove inside the outer bars. The screw is provided with a workmanlike handle. The bow-shaped edges are blunt, not sharpened.

When in operation, the crude apparatus is mounted horizontally, and the condemned man is persuaded to insert his neck in the space between A and B. A few turns of the screw fix the neck firmly ; at this point the victim gives his last message to the world, and receives his last consolations from the attendant priests. Only another half-dozen turns of the screw are needed, slowly but certainly squeezing out the life of the unfortunate delinquent.

The garrote has not been used for nearly half a century, for the Andorrans are a law-abiding people and few in numbers. But it still remains the official method of execution, and presumably it would be used if any Andorran were ill-advised enough to commit murder within the borders of his own country.

Many people argue that when death is certain, the manner of death matters nothing. But if criminals ever form a Trade Union, its first campaign might be directed towards securing humane methods in Andorran executions.

From another box the *guardia* produced some less gruesome exhibits—the ceremonial hats of the Bishop of Urgel and the President of France. In modern years the Bishop has usually contented himself with sending a deputy to take his place, while the

Prefect of the Pyrénées-Orientales represents French interests.

St. Ermengol, from whom the chapel takes its name, was Bishop of Urgel early in the eleventh century; I could find out little of interest about this worthy, except that he was drowned while building a bridge over the Segre.

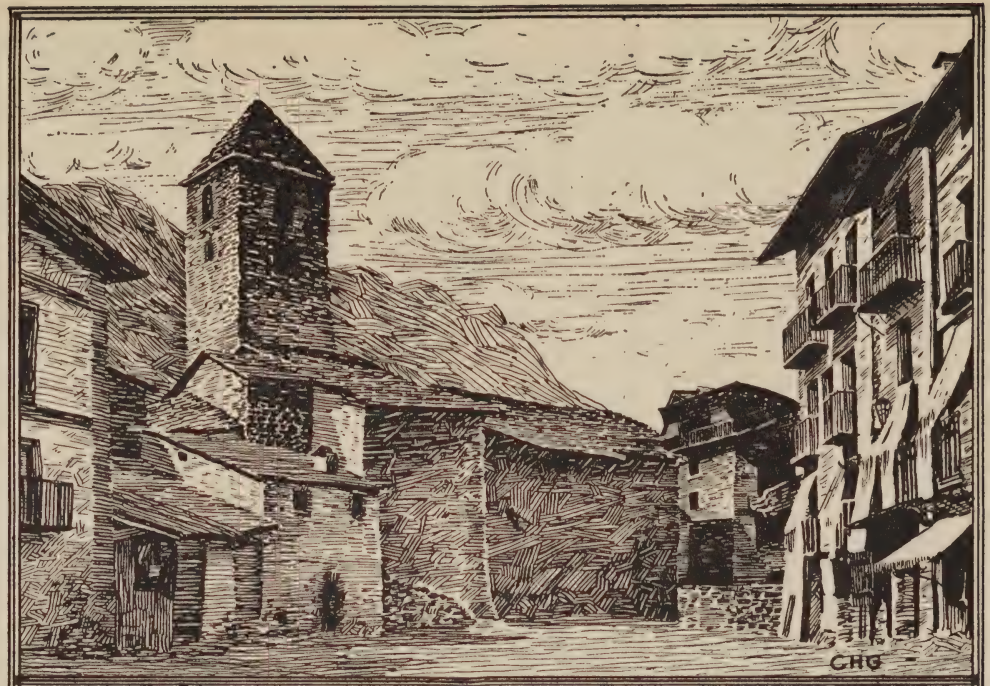
Adjoining the council chamber is another important room—the dining-hall. Here the members of the council are fed before commencing their deliberations. This is an excellent idea, and always tends to create a friendly atmosphere for a debate. It is very difficult to quarrel with a man after you have enjoyed a good meal in his company. Hunger breeds sharp words and hasty judgments. Such is the Andorran theory, at any rate. A huge kitchen adjoins the dining-room. There I was shown a spit of enormous size; under a large chimney in the middle of the room is an open hearth where a sheep is often roasted whole. Some of the cookery utensils are hundreds of years old and are still in common use.

I was told that absenteeism among the members of the council was almost unknown. When I saw the preparations for their welfare, I was not surprised. I feel confident that I should turn up regularly myself. The Andorrans are of a Scottish temperament in that they believe in getting full value on all occasions. Now the Andorran Member of Parliament is unpaid; his sole privileges are a free dinner when the council meets, free stabling and forage for his mule, and a free bed for the night. So these perquisites are seldom neglected.

There is still another room on the first floor of the Casa dels Valls. This is another long chamber, which is used as a schoolroom. Until a few years ago it was the only school of any kind in the country, but now I found one in each village. But this chamber is the most remarkable in the palace—if such a word can be applied to an edifice half the size of the town hall of an English country-town. The walls of the schoolroom are covered with a series of frescoes which would probably be world famous if it were in a more favourable situation for visits. The frescoes have every appearance of mediævalism; actually, they are of a much later date. Though its seclusion from the world guaranteed material safety, it meant that Andorra's culture necessarily lagged behind that of its neighbours. The Andorran artist of two hundred years ago painted his pictures along mediæval lines. You will see portrayed on the walls scenes from the trials, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Parts of them have been whitewashed over, but they compel attention. An old fresco in a museum and an old fresco in its natural state are two very different things.

The second floor of the Casa dels Valls is occupied by the dormitories for the use of the members. I prefer the hotel.

The pride of the Andorrans in their national headquarters is very real. When you visit the Casa dels Valls it is just as well to forget that it is no larger than the Carnegie Library in Ishypusti, Pennsylvania. In any case, comparisons are wasted on the Andorran; the only buildings he can consider beside his own



THE PLAZA, ANDORRA-LA-VIELLA

palace are the cathedral and its attendant edifices at Urgel.

Only a few yards from the House of the Valleys is a tiny square—the main " place " of the capital. Houses of considerable dignity, if of uniform plainness, flank its sides. Huddled in a corner are the remainder of the national buildings of Andorra. Alongside a presbytery of charming simplicity is a lean-to shack which might be a cow-shed, or even a pig-sty. The interior would bear out the natural assumption. Actually, it is the official prison of Andorra. A door of thick timber, plentifully strengthened by iron bands, swings on rusty hinges. The one and only cell is dark, dismal, and dirty. One does not need the explanation that crime is rare in Andorra—the prison obviously has not been used for years. I asked the " jailer " how long it would take him to find the key ; he knew where it was, he said, but it took him half an hour to find it. Presumably his prisoner would have waited for him.

Adjoining the prison is the church—the largest in Andorra, but still miniature to English eyes. To an American it would probably seem infinitesimal. The Spanish influence is perceived in its gaudy decoration ; primary colours strike the eye fiercely from all parts of the altar. The woodwork is pure Catalan, however, and Catalan carving has an art of its own. But I was glad to escape outside and rest my eyes on the cool grey of the surrounding houses.

Apart from its principal buildings, Andorra the Old is one of the least interesting of the Andorran villages. The people are less unsophisticated ; since the capital is

so easily reached from the Spanish side, a visitor is no novelty—it will have as many as a dozen in a week. Rich Spaniards from northern Spain pay flying visits in their cars; the autobus services ply from Urgel three times a day. Yes, they see life in Andorra the Old. I found it much less attractive than Canillo, where strangers are a curiosity, since only the hardy will venture there.

The remaining village of Andorra is St. Julian de Loria, near the Spanish border. This was once the capital of Andorra, as a stone pedestal records. Even to-day it is the trading centre of the republic. One man has recently made a valiant effort to open up Andorra to foreign trade. I was told that he was a deserter from the French Army, who took refuge in Andorra during the war, but I hardly liked to ask him if this were true. He finds that he makes his fortune very, very slowly, for Andorra does not take readily to innovations. What does Andorra want with commerce, when smuggling is so profitable? And St. Julian de Loria is the headquarters of smuggling over the Spanish frontier.

Reality is seldom like romance. The word "smuggler" conjures up a certain vision—vivid alike to man or boy. I looked round at the faces of the men who talked with me in the triangular "square" of St. Julian—calm, unexpressive, unemotional—with mild features and pleasant mien. Surely it was impossible that these men could be smugglers. And where was the picturesque costume of the story-books? Only the old men wearing the national headgear—a red Phrygian cap—looked anything like the part. But I challenged

them point-blank. There was a moment's hesitation—after all, I was a stranger, and might be an agent of France or Spain. But my words showed them that I knew—I merely wanted confirmation. I got it. Hardly a man there but had smuggled tobacco or cattle over the frontier into France or Spain. How was it done? Ah, that was not for the *señor* to know; but in the mountains there were many paths which might not be seen except by him who knew the valleys as he knew his right hand. The straight road to Urgel was the easiest way into Spain, but not the only way. One of the younger men grew talkative—and boastful. Only two nights before, he said, he had carried a pack of cigars over the frontier to an agent who knew how to dispose of them in a profitable manner. Next week he would go again. No, he had never been caught, and never would be. How could a Spanish *aduana* pit himself in mountain craft against an Andorran? Even if he were caught, the *aduanas* were not too well paid and—well, the *señor* understood? I did. I have had experiences with continental frontier guards before now.

The profession of smuggling is second only to that of agriculture in Andorra. It is not a full-time occupation, of course. One tills the fields by day and smuggles at certain seasons by night. Naturally, smuggling is not regarded as a crime. I would not like to guarantee that the President himself has not made illicit journeys over the frontier in his time. I know definitely that some members of the General Council are still on the active list. There is little that is spectacular in Andorra's smuggling; tobacco, it is true, must be carried by

devious paths by night, but the expeditions are so carefully planned and the Andorrans are so superior in mountain acumen to the frontier guards that the risk is almost infinitesimal.

It is impossible to blame the Andorrans for smuggling. Any independent people, placed under the same geographical and economical conditions, would naturally turn to smuggling. Tariffs are an artificial barrier, and a natural people sees no harm in breaking the barrier down. Both France and Spain, of course, have high protective duties on many and varied classes of goods. It is impossible to set up a tariff without inciting certain classes of people to evade it. You will find smuggling to some degree on every frontier, and the Pyrenees form no exception. And Andorra, as one historian has phrased it, "serves as a free storehouse between the two cordons of French and Spanish customs for the products of both nations." Andorra is the centre of Pyrenean smuggling; both France and Spain have made desperate attempts to stamp it out. Fifty years ago the tension between France and Andorra was very strained on this point. The French farmers addressed bitter complaints to their Government. It appeared that quantities of their wines were exported into Andorra, and then smuggled—not into Spain, but back into France. Thus the smuggled wine could be sold in the grower's own village much cheaper than the grower's own direct supplies—on which the excise duty, of course, had to be paid.

The General Council of Andorra promised more than once to persuade its people to refrain from smuggling.

But to put such a resolution into practice would have been more difficult than to have applied conscription to Ireland during the war. In desperation, the French Government in 1881 forbade all trade of any kind with Andorra—all exports and imports of every kind were banned. The net result was, if anything, a slight increase in the traffic. It would have needed an army corps of frontier guards to have had any other effect. Eventually, the back-smuggling of wines was only eliminated when the duties were so reduced that smuggling was no longer profitable. True, Andorra replied even to this step—by growing tobacco within her own borders, to be smuggled out as required.

More recently there has been a large increase in the smuggling of cattle from Spain into France—quite contrary to all regulations. The methods of smuggling are two—and both are simplicity itself, as I saw for myself. After a series of decrees by the French Government had produced no result, an arrangement was reached whereby cattle of Andorran origin only should be admitted into France. Certificates of origin were to be signed by the President. This system still prevails, and certificates of origin are as easy to obtain in Andorra as postage stamps in this country—easier, if our music-hall comedians are to be believed. Armed with his certificate, the Andorran may drive his cattle (obtained from Spain only a few days before) with impunity into France. In such a manner is smuggling officially tolerated—even encouraged—in Andorra.

The second method of smuggling cattle into France is even simpler. Certain pastures in Andorran territory

are rented to French villages for grazing purposes. L'Hospitalet, for example, rents a tract of land to the north of the Soulane. What more natural than that the Andorran cattle should occasionally become mixed with the French cattle? And who is to say if the French herd goes home at night a little larger than it came? They do these things very well in Andorra.

If you mention smuggling to an Andorran, he may admit it frankly. It is more likely that he will go right out of his way in an attempt to persuade you that the trade is now extinct. You may believe him or not, as you please. It is quite true that the smuggling traffic decreased tremendously during the early years of this century, but it seems to me that there has been a revival. International complications reverberate in strange places. The old-time smuggler traded only on the tariffs. The smuggler of to-day trades on the rates of exchange.

The plunge of the franc has revived some of the ancient glories in Andorra. The rates of exchange may be regulated to a decimal point in the office of the *arbitragateur*, but it is still possible to buy many things very cheaply in France, and to sell them comparatively dearly in Spain—if you can get them over the frontier. A forcible instance came to my notice. I bought a Kodak film in a French border town for the equivalent of elevenpence. A day later I bought a similar film in a Spanish town, not three miles away, for the equivalent of one shilling and ninepence. I do not suggest, of course, that the Andorrans are busily occupied in smuggling Kodak films—though they would do so if

the demand were sufficiently large. But there are many other commodities—wines, tobacco, and even food. The value of these things is absolute, not relative, and a profit of fifty to a hundred per cent. may be made after a twenty-mile journey.

So if you chance by night on an unfrequented mule track among the high mountains, when the *aduanas* are engaged in another direction, you may step back a hundred years. You may see the train of laden mules and laden men, deftly picking their slow but certain path towards the southern pass. You may see their packs, bulging with merchandise that will never pay duty. And you may see perhaps their escort, each man carrying a gun which has not spoken in anger for fifty years. It will not speak to-night unless . . . but the arrangements are always perfectly made. Andorra has not lost its old skill. The art is again coming into its own.

And that may be the reason why many tourists complain that Andorra gives them no welcome. For smuggling is a delicate operation, and every stranger must needs be regarded with suspicion.

Andorra has another distinction besides that of being a land of smugglers. It is a Gretna Green for Spain and France. There is no civil form of marriage in Andorra —only the religious ceremony. To get married you have but to find a priest and do the business in the best American film style. The little church in the square of Andorra-la-Viella has seen many runaway romances. A native Andorran wedding, however, is not a matter of a few moments; it is a day's business. The couple

are usually married in the morning, so as to allow more time for the inevitable feasting and dancing.

As in all Catholic countries, an Andorran funeral is a decorous affair. I saw a doleful procession winding through the narrow alleys of Canillo. There were the priest and his acolytes preceding the coffin. Six wiry comrades carried the dead man to his last halt. Then came the mourners: first the men, then the women—a decent interval in between. Even the widow walked behind the men—such is the inferiority of the sex in Andorra. Most of the women wore black, for black is fashionable in Andorra at all times. But the men wore anything that came to hand, including the ubiquitous blue shirt. But the sympathy was apparent if the outward show was lacking.

They are pleasant people in Andorra. It is a strange land, wild and savage. Yet you may pass through it in the summer with safety, for the winds do not whistle so fiercely down the valleys. And there is an old saying, "There's no time like the present." If you ever think of visiting Andorra, you should bear this in mind. For the old Andorra is passing away with increasing celerity. The advance of the last ten years is greater than that of the preceding century. The road has come to Andorra, and new ideas follow the road. Education has come to Andorra, and new ideas follow education. Strangers have come to Andorra, and new ideas came with them. Can it be that Andorra will soon become a tourist Mecca? I hesitate to believe it, but there are signs which cannot be ignored. Some Andorrans believe it. They tell me that the innkeeper at Encamp has sent his

son to the Grand Hôtel at Font Romeu, that he may learn all the art of the *hôtelier*; then, it is said, he intends to build another Grand Hôtel by the side of the little lake of Engoulastes, close by Escaldas with its hot springs. But most of his fellows do not favour his idea, and it may be that their counsels will prevail. I hope so.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORY AND CONSTITUTION OF ANDORRA

PLEASE don't skip this chapter because its title may sound uninteresting. The history of a people is never dull, and the story of Andorra is almost a romance. In fact, if you ask any Andorran to speak of the history of his country, he will tell you a story which is too good to be true. He will begin to talk about Charlemagne. The name of the most impressive figure of the Middle Ages is entwined with every tradition of the whole Pyrenean range, but Charlemagne is particularly venerated in Andorra, since he founded the State. After the Moors had overrun Spain, they threw out their outposts to Carcassonne and Narbonne, the native will remind you. But such a threat to the Frankish kingdom could not be ignored. Charles Martel stemmed the northern advance of the Moors, and overthrew them in a great battle at Tours. What was left of the Moorish Army retired rapidly to the shelter of the Pyrenees. Later, Charlemagne marched into Spain against the Moors in 778. A pitched battle was necessary before he could secure the right of entry into the peninsula. It was fought in the valley now known as that of the Carol, taking its name from the Frankish king. Now in this battle, so the Andorran tradition goes, Charlemagne was at one time very hard pressed. The valley was

narrow and the fight was difficult, and the day might have gone ill but for a timely diversion. For in a neighbouring valley, that of the Valira, lived many tribes of Visigoths who had suffered many things at the hands of the Moors. Many times had they been driven from their homes in northern Spain by the barbarous invader, till at last they had taken refuge in the inhospitable valleys to the north of the isolated city of Urgel. At the news of the battle the refugees rushed to the aid of the Christian king. The able-bodied men—few in number, but stout of heart—seized their crude weapons and struck eastward over the mountains. If the traditional route is correctly described, they crossed over the pass now known as the Porteille Blanche d'Andorre. It was a difficult march, for the snow was still on the heights, but the gallant little band pressed on, and descended on the flanks of the Moorish army near Porta. The Moors may be pardoned for mistaking the tiny band, descending the impassable mountains, for a flank attack in force. Charlemagne, as ever, was not slow to make the most of the diversion, and pressed home his attack. The Moors were defeated with great slaughter, and retired in confusion into Spain.

Charlemagne, naturally enough, was extremely grateful to the men of the Valira Valley for their timely assistance. "He who aids Charlemagne does not rue the day," said the king. By way of thanks, he promised them independent status under his suzerainty, and guaranteed them protection against Moorish marauders. And so the little band marched back to their rude homes in the neighbouring valley, well pleased to

CHARLEMAGNE

From the Portrait by Albrecht Dürer

have earned the friendship of the mightiest monarch of Europe.[1]

Some of the older men may have had some misgivings. For the Moors were established in force in Urgel, from which point the valley of the Valira was open to attack. On the other hand, a deep range of difficult mountains lay between them and the aid which Charlemagne had promised in case of need. Any such forebodings were only too well founded. The Moors were not slow to realize that the men who had caused their downfall were now at their mercy. Desolating raids succeeded each other with bewildering frequency. Such poor crops as were dragged from the barren soil were devastated by the Moors; the best of the men of the valley lay dead across their own thresholds. In despair the survivors appealed to Charlemagne to fulfil his promise. The monarch was busily engaged in more important affairs, and he could not come. But his word was his bond, and he sent his son in his place. Louis le Debonnaire—or Louis the Pious, as the Andorrans invariably call him—entered Andorra from the north and engaged the Moors in battle. The scene of the encounter is conflictingly fixed as the space between Escaldas and Andorra-la-Viella and the valley of Massana. Whatever the site, Louis inflicted a crushing defeat on the Moors—the natives again playing no mean part in the battle. The surviving Moors fled southwards, never to enter the valley again.

It was Louis le Debonnaire (or Louis le Pieux or Ludwig, as he is variously called), acting on behalf of his father, Charlemagne, who organized the settlement

of Andorra. If tradition may be believed, it was he who gave the country its name. He confirmed its independent status, subject to a small annual *feu* to the suzerain. The ecclesiastical tithes were granted, quite naturally, to the Bishop of Urgel, now restored to his see. One half of the tithe was to go to the Bishop direct, and the other half to the chapter to assist in the restoration of the cathedral, which had been practically destroyed by the Moors. All this was set down in writing in A.D. 805, and was confirmed in respect of the relationship between Andorra and the see of Urgel by another charter in 819.

Such is the story of the foundation of Andorra, as the native will tell it. The story is a fitting one for its subject. In such a way might a sturdy little republic like Andorra first establish its independence. It seems almost a pity that the history which has been accepted for more than ten centuries should now be so rudely discredited. But both Art and Science must seek the truth. Modern historical research fails to support the legendary story. Indeed, it flatly contradicts the history in one important particular.

I suppose that it is but natural that history must be rewritten with each successive generation, since the view-point changes so rapidly. Our modern historians seem to take an unholy delight in ruthlessly exposing our most fervent beliefs as frauds. The incident of Alfred and the cakes, so dear to the heart of every man who delights in the picturesque—this, for example, is a mere fable, if all we hear is true. Even our most cherished dates are not safe from the ravages of historical research. At school we did not see the importance of

dates, but if there was one date we could always remember, surely it was 1066. Yet nowadays some historians would try to persuade us that the Battle of Hastings was fought in 1064! How ignorant people must have been in those days, since they did not even know the year in which they lived!

The only documentary evidence which touches the origin of Andorra is the charter of 819, which rests in the archives of the cathedral at Urgel. Modern research, however, has proved conclusively that the charter is a forgery. All historical students are now agreed on this; only a few interested clerics dispute it. The language in which the pseudo-charter is couched places the date of its writing with some certainty two or three centuries after the time of Charlemagne. The subsequent history of Andorra suggests a most obvious motive for the forgery.

The modern historian's account of the foundation of Andorra is less romantic, but more probable. When Charlemagne drove the Moors towards the Ebro he found that the Pyrenean valleys were almost depopulated. His endeavours to resettle the region were not entirely successful, for many of the valleys were not particularly inviting, and all were subject to harassing raids by the Moors. As an inducement to settlers—and in order to establish some sort of human frontier to his kingdom—Charlemagne introduced his system of *jus apusionis*—a term which a modern writer has happily translated as "squatters' rights." Groups of families were induced to occupy a valley under a promise of virtual independence, subject only to a nominal suzerainty. A chain of such tiny States came into being all

along the Pyrenees; most of them were absorbed in the domains of the suzerain at the first convenient moment. Some preserved a precarious independence until the eighteenth century; Andorra is the only one which has survived.

Such is the most feasible explanation of the origin of Andorra. The charter of A.D. 805 was probably a writ of *jus apusionis* in favour of the men of the valley of the Valira. That of A.D. 819 only dealt with the parishes of Andorra among many other matters relating to the see of Urgel, and probably referred to the ecclesiastical rights only. Whether the Andorrans did actually render service to Charlemagne is a matter of conjecture. Another local tradition has it that Charlemagne found the valley depopulated, and peopled it with some of his own soldiers. This seems to be more reasonable than the more romantic story.

It was customary for some knight who had rendered conspicuous service to the king to be nominated as suzerain of land granted under a writ of *jus apusionis*. There is no record of a temporal overlord being given to Andorra until A.D. 843. By that time Charles the Bald had succeeded his father, Louis le Debonnaire, as Holy Roman Emperor, and he nominated Siegfried (or Sicfrid), Count of Urgel, as overlord of Andorra. The *droit Carlovingien*—the tribute payable to the Emperor—was from that time paid to the Count of Urgel and his successors. In return for such payment, the Andorrans received a nominal protection against invasion and a minimum of interference; for the legal rights of the suzerain were extremely limited.

The gift of the Andorran *droit Carlovingien* was made because of the services of the Counts of Urgel against the Moors. Urgel was at that time an outpost of the Frankish kingdom, and its position was a desperate one. The Count was separated from his friends by the wildest mountains of the Pyrenees, while liable to attack on three sides. But right valiantly did the lords of Urgel fulfil their duty. Of the first eight of whom records exist, no fewer than five died in action against the Moors.

It was the grant of feudal rights to the Counts of Urgel that started a quarrel which raged for many centuries, and which continues in a milder form even to-day. The enactment of A.D. 819 was read by the Bishop of Urgel to confer temporal as well as spiritual powers over the Andorran valleys. It may be that the language was ambiguous, but it must be remembered that the prelates of the time often held wide temporal sway—the official title of the incumbent of Urgel, in fact, was that of " Prince-Bishop." It would seem, however, that the true intent of the charter was in reference to religious matters only : the subsequent donation of the feudal rights to the Counts of Urgel would support this view.

Under these circumstances it was very natural to find that an argument arose as to the relative rights of Count and Bishop. The dispute developed into a bitter quarrel, which continued without cessation for over four hundred years. The Andorrans were singularly immune from evil consequences. In fact, it is probable that the feud was the means of preserving their inde-

pendence. Other quasi-independent States had been given one overlord, and had been speedily absorbed within his domains. Andorra had two masters, neither of whom would permit the other to dominate the valley. So Andorra preserved its independence, just as she now survives because neither France nor Spain would permit annexation on the part of the other.

It was in the middle of the thirteenth century that the dispute reached its climax. By that time the temporal authority had changed hands more than once. The house of Urgel had amalgamated with that of Castellbo —a neighbouring fortified city—and a certain Arnaud, Count Castellbo, had an only daughter, Ermessenda, who married Roger Bernard, Count of Foix. Thus the suzerainty of Andorra passed to the French side of the Pyrenees.

Roger Bernard was more than a powerful local prince ; he was a man of determination and iron will, and he was not the type to bow to the claims of a bishop. Boldly he stated his suzerainty of Andorra in no compromising terms. The Bishop replied in kind, holding the threat of excommunication as a trump card. Roger Bernard was not to be bluffed, and forthwith played his own hand. It was a strong one, for he launched an army against Urgel itself. After many skirmishes, the town was invested. Roger gave certain indications of his determination to see the affair to a satisfactory conclusion—from his own point of view. It may be that his favourite ceremony—that of hanging his prisoners in sight of the walls—had its effect on the Bishop's supporters, for Urgel surrendered to his arms.

At this point the Bishop of Valencia intervened. He appeared to be a friend of both parties, and he foresaw grave complications if his brother-bishop were left to the mercy of the Frankish nobleman. He suggested an *Acte de Paréage*. These arrangements were very common in mediæval times. It often happened that kings, in after-the-battle generosity, allotted large and semi-defined grants of land to their leading followers. Not infrequently the new owner found that his grant clashed with existing rights, or that his suzerainty overlapped that of a fellow-nobleman. In such cases an *Acte de Paréage* was usually arranged, either in place of or following a local war to decide the question. It was such an *Acte de Paréage* that the Bishop of Valencia drew up, assisted by a small body of conciliators. This was signed by Roger Bernard and the Bishop in 1278. It is particularly in relation to Andorran history. While it defines the spheres of influence of Count and Bishop, it throws a clear light on the accepted constitution of Andorra of the day—a constitution which had evidently existed since the birth of the State, and which exists with only minor amendments to-day.

By the *Acte de Paréage* of 1278, the Bishop admitted the claims of the house of Foix to a share in the administration and revenues of Andorra. The Count might be represented in the valleys, if he so wished, by an agent, or *viguier*. The equivalent right of the Bishop is not mentioned, but it is evident that he had been so represented for some centuries. Each overlord was to appoint a deputy, or *bayle* (Latin, *bajulus*), to attend jointly to the administration of justice. In the absence

of one, his colleague was to take any necessary action. Suitable arrangements were also made for the division of the monetary tribute to be paid by the valley.

Such was the agreement which had the effect of confirming the constitution of Andorra. It was subjected to minor amendments by a second *Acte de Paréage* ten years later. All parties concerned were apparently satisfied. If the Andorrans had any complaints, they were not in a position to put them forward. The policy of playing off one party against another was not then fully exploited in Andorran politics.

Just as suzerain rights had passed from the house of Urgel to that of Foix by marriage and intermarriage, so the same rights passed in the course of years to the French Crown. Successively through the families of Grailly and d'Albert and Bourbon, the house of Foix became absorbed in that of Navarre. So, when Henry IV became King of France, the *droit Carlovingien* was payable direct to the royal house.

It was about the same time as Roger Bernard fought against the Bishop of Urgel that the General Council came into being. Local tradition asserts that the Council of Andorra sprang from the meetings of the men of the valley in the churchyards, when such important matters as the allotting of pastures were discussed. It is quite conceivable that at these gatherings—quite usual in the Pyrenean valleys, where grazing-ground has always been common property—the discussions should occasionally mount to higher affairs. The question continually to the fore would naturally be that of the quarrel between the rival suzerains. The step from such

impromptu debates to the establishment of a Council is not a long one. The exact date of its foundation is not known, but it would probably come into being as a real force in the country immediately after the *Acte de Paréage* of 1278. Both Count and Bishop doubtless found such a Council very useful in their dealings with the valley, since it could attend to the most important item—the payment of the tribute. At any rate, the power of the Council increased with succeeding years.

At some period in its history—not even an approximate date can be given—the Council scored a success which is typical of its growing influence. Both Count and Bishop agreed that the *viguiers* should appoint the two *bayles* from a list of six men (usually one from each parish) selected by the Council. This ensured that the *bayles* should always be Andorrans—as had actually been the practice for many centuries. This procedure still prevails to-day.

For several hundred subsequent years the history of Andorra is a negative one. If the dual controllers ever quarrelled, the disputes were not sufficiently serious as to necessitate a war or even an action at law. The records of the cathedral of Urgel rarely mention Andorra, except in respect of the payment of tithes and other minor ecclesiastical matters. In the meantime the men of the valley lived a secluded life in their stone huts, and terraced the mountain-sides to augment their scanty acreage of arable land.

The French Revolution disturbed the peace of Europe, and even the protecting mountains could not protect Andorra against an eddy of the storm. The first

disquieting symptom came in a most unexpected way. The Revolutionary Government of 1793 refused to accept the annual tribute payable to the French Crown, on the grounds that such money savoured of the hated feudal system. Consternation reigned in the Council of Andorra. By this time, at any rate, the Andorrans realized that they owed their independence to the accident that had given them two patrons, each jealous of the other's rights. If France were to renounce her share of the suzerainty, then annexation by Spain could only be a question of time. This was one of the most anxious periods in Andorran history. For the idea of freedom was deeply engrained in the heart of every Andorran. They lived at peace in their secluded valleys, but they had heard of the wars which had devastated Europe with bewildering frequency. They had heard of the sons who went to the wars and never returned. They had seen, whenever France and Spain were at war, how the frontier valleys were in the midst of the struggle and seldom escaped unscathed. They had seen their brothers of the neighbouring valleys groaning under crushing taxation, their lives made intolerable by unjust and corrupt administration. The torch of freedom in Andorra had not been extinguished, but its flame wavered in the gust created by the action of the French Government.

The following year was even more critical. By this time France and Spain were at war, and a Revolutionary army was sent to capture Urgel—one of the most important fortresses on the Spanish side. General Chabert had command of the French army, and the forces under

his charge were not too large for his task. Only two approaches were open to him. He could force the pass over the Cerdagne and fight his way up the Segre Valley till he reached Urgel. This was a difficult and dangerous operation. His alternative was to pass into Andorra from the north and to attack Urgel from the Valira Valley. This held a better promise of success, and he determined to adopt it. With his army encamped near the Puymorens Pass, he demanded the right of passage through Andorra.

To the eternal credit of the tiny republic, it rejected his demand utterly and absolutely, with no less firmness than did Belgium reject a similar demand in 1914. A most vigorous protest was made by the General Council, not only to Chabert, but direct to Paris, and—most important of all—the entire Andorran Army was mobilized, for the first time for almost a thousand years.

The Andorran Army consisted then, as now, of every *cap de casa*—every head of household. A body of about five hundred men assembled—rudely armed, but strong of arm and determined in spirit. Their knowledge of the mountains made each man worth a troop—and the valleys might have been made for ambuscades.

Chabert's lieutenants would have had him brush this puny force aside and press on to Urgel. But Chabert was a man of some vision. He had no doubt as to his ability to force his way through Andorra. Within two or three days at the most his army would lie before Urgel. But what was to happen then? The Andorran force was negligible in an open combat—which it

assuredly would never risk. But between an army and its base—with long lines of communications offering unlimited opportunities for guerrilla attack—then the Andorrans might prove themselves to be something more than a mere nuisance. So Chabert gave very serious consideration to the Andorran protest and its backing, and led his army to another part of the frontier.

So passed one of the critical moments in Andorran history. The influence of the episode on the strength of the republic can hardly be overestimated.

Not that the position was free from anxiety. The Revolutionary Government steadfastly refused to accept the tribute which Andorra periodically offered. Fortunately, the armies of Chabert and his co-commanders achieved some considerable successes in the north of Spain, so that annexation by that country was out of the question for the time being.

The General Council appears to have followed the course of the Revolution with marked keenness, awaiting its opportunity. It came soon after Napoleon had assumed control of France. (Was there a country in the world that was not affected by the rise of the Corsican ?) At the earliest convenient moment, Andorra addressed a memorial to Napoleon, giving a lengthy statement of the case, and praying that he would confirm Andorra in its ancient rights and privileges, accepting the usual tribute in token. Napoleon, with that sense of justice that marked his dealings with all who did not cross his ambition, consented at once. In a decree dated March 25, 1806, Napoleon ordered the newly-formed Depart-

ment of the Ariège to act as the representative of the French Government in its relations with Andorra. The annual tribute was reduced to the nominal sum of 960 francs, which was to be paid to the treasurer of the Department. As token of suzerainty, three deputies of the valley were to swear allegiance yearly by placing their hands between those of the Prefect of the Ariège. To this officer was handed the responsibility of nominating the *viguier* who should act on France's behalf in Andorra. This decree, so vital to the valleys, only differs in minor conditions to the *Acte de Paréage* of 1278.

Within a century the Andorrans were again called upon to assert their independence in forcible manner—the demonstration on this occasion being for the benefit of Spain. During the Carlist Wars, a considerable force of rebels had its base under the shelter of the Sierra del Cadi. In the course of skirmishes with the royal troops —culminating in the siege of Urgel—it appears that the Andorran frontier was violated by both sides. A stern warning was addressed to the combatants, and the army of the republic was again mobilized. On this occasion there were several frontier " incidents," and the Andorrans had to use force in expelling intruders. The accounts—mainly verbal—of the clashes are extremely vague. This is much to be regretted, since the " incidents " represent the only occasion on which the Andorran Army has been in action in a period of eleven hundred years. Apart from the actual use of force, the whole incident presents a striking parallel to the course of events at the time of the French Revolution. When

the Carlists declared a republic in 1873, they refused to recognize that Spain, through the Bishop of Urgel, had any feudal rights over Andorra. But on the accession of Alfonso XII in 1875 the Andorrans petitioned once more for a resumption of normal relations, and their wish was granted.

The recent history of Andorra is largely political, and centres on the endeavours of France and Spain to secure the chief influence on the General Council. Until 1866 the members of the Council had been elected by the richer families only—that is to say, by the families which owned the largest portions of land. But the wave of reform which swept over Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century sent a backwash even to Andorra, and the franchise was extended to all *caps de casa*—every head of family throughout the republic. This is the only reform of importance that is to be found in Andorran history.

The comparatively strong influence of France and Spain in Andorran politics dates back for less than twenty years. During the nineteenth century the Andorrans were never slow to assert their independence. An incident which occurred in 1855 shows that the spirit of the valley was as strong as ever. A murder had been committed—an almost unknown occurrence —and the murderer was tried and condemned according to Andorran law and custom. But the Bishop of Urgel —at that time a prelate named Carxal y Estrada—intervened, and declared that he would pardon the condemned man. There were manifestations of anger throughout the valley. The Bishop was told in measured

terms that he had no right to interfere. Still he persisted, and the protest of the republic was risingly indignant. Fortunately, or unfortunately, according to the point of view, the piquant incident was ended by the death of the condemned man while in prison awaiting execution.

It is by a series of such injudicious interferences that the Bishops of Urgel have forfeited much of their influence over the people of the valley. What might be called " The Battle of the Casino " of 1880 illustrates this. Had the Bishop of the time had his way, Andorra would now be the Monaco of Europe. The history of the affair was not at all creditable to the Bishop, and is still vehemently quoted by the Anti-Clerical party in the General Council. A French syndicate had been formed to establish a fashionable gaming centre on an enormous scale. In order that their plans might be carried out without interference, the directors sought a site where they might be immune from the rigorous laws of a powerful State. Several of the tiny republics of Europe were suitable, and Andorra was the first choice. The syndicate took stock of the mountain State, and fixed on Escaldas as the probable site of its casino. The hot springs might be an additional attraction—or excuse. All that was necessary was to buy from the Andorrans virtual control of their own country.

The syndicate first approached the French Government, with a view to securing its support to the scheme. This was definitely refused. The alternative was next tried, and the Bishop of Urgel proved more tractable. His price has never been made known, but the syndicate would be prepared to pay handsomely for such influ-

ential support. The whole scheme professed to be " for the good of the country," of course, and the Bishop gave it his blessing. Evidently he had not learned the lesson of incidents in which his predecessors had figured. The opposition in Andorra amounted almost to rage. The debates in the General Council were so heated that the usually imperturbable Catalans hardly recognized their own speeches. The Spanish party, swayed by the influence—and, possibly, by the bribes of the syndicate—strongly advocated the adoption of the scheme. It was argued—probably with reason—that the prosperity of the country would increase by many times. But material prosperity does not always spell happiness, and the Andorrans were not prepared to forgo their long-retained independence for mere financial gain. But the scheme was pushed so strongly by the Spanish that the French Government decided to take action. A battalion of infantry encamped on the Soulane, within an hour's march of the Embalire Pass, and within a day of the capital. Thus encouraged, the General Council hurled a message of defiance at the syndicate and all its friends, including the Bishop. This was the death-blow of the scheme. When next the idea of a gaming centre was formulated, Monaco took the place of Andorra. But who could say that Monaco has gained more by its consent than did Andorra by its refusal ?

Since that time the French influence has steadily increased. While the Spanish diplomacy has frequently blundered, the French have adopted an attitude of unwavering friendship. And who understand the doctrine of ingratiating politeness better than do the

French? I have referred to the Corot which hangs in the tiny chapel of the Casa dels Valls. It is a valuable picture, and it was presented to Andorra by President Fauré, of France, as a token of the constant affection that France bore towards the mountain State. Spain would never think of such a delicate touch when dealing with a State so negligible in size and force. This picture means a lot to the Andorran. He may not appreciate its art, but he knows that its value is equivalent to about a hundred years' tribute—and that is an argument which he can appreciate.

It is customary to describe the two parties as Clerical and Anti-Clerical—the usual distinction in most Catholic countries. In Andorra these two divisions coincide approximately with the Spanish and French parties respectively. Most of the battles are fought on questions of national influence rather than of religion. The Clerical or Spanish party is hopelessly conservative; the Anti-Clerical or French faction represents the progressive spirit. In 1893, for example, France proposed that a telegraph line should be constructed from Ax-les-Thermes to Andorra-la-Viella. The suggestion was vigorously opposed by the Bishop of Urgel; so far as one can perceive, his one argument against the scheme was that it had been proposed by France. However, the necessary motion was carried by the General Council, and Andorra had its first sight of the wonders of modern invention.

The same international discussion follows every suggestion of modernity. The French proposed that a road should be cut into Andorra, branching off the main

road from Ax-les-Thermes to Bourg Madame. The Spanish party objected, on the ground that it was undesirable to open the gates of Andorra to foreigners. Yet a year or two later the capital of the valley was connected to Urgel by road. Some of the dignity of Andorran independence is necessarily lost by these unworthy squabbles.

Before considering the possibilities which may lie in the future of Andorra, a brief glance at its constitution may be of service. It has been mentioned that only minor amendments have been made since the republic was inaugurated. The two suzerains—though the term has now lost much of its ancient meaning—are each represented in Andorra by a *viguier*, or agent. The *viguier* of the Bishop is appointed for three years, and he must be an Andorran. The representative of the French Government has no time limit to his term of office; the duties are now fulfilled by the Prefect of the Department of Pyrénées-Orientales, or one of his subordinates from Perpignan. The *viguiers* are entitled to wear swords as a token of their high office. Each *viguier* appoints a *bayle*, who must be an Andorran and selected from a short list submitted by the General Council. The *bayles* are the general executive officers of the republic. *Viguiers* and *bayles* are required to take an oath to respect the laws and customs of Andorra.

The position of highest importance, of course, is that of the *Syndic*, or President, who presides over all meetings of the Council and controls the local administration. The General Council (or, to give it its full title, "Le Conseil général et souverain des vallées d'An-

dorre ") consists of twenty-four members. For electoral purposes the country is divided into six village-districts. Each of these has its own parish council, whose area of administration includes the neighbouring hamlets. A duly elected *consul* presides over each district council, with a second *consul* as deputy. The General Council consists of (*a*) the two serving *consuls* from each village, (*b*) two other councillors from each village, usually, but not necessarily, men who have previously served as *consuls*. The *Syndic* is elected by and from the members of the General Council.

The General Council meets normally five times a year—at the feasts of Noël (Christmas), Paques (Easter), Pentecost (Whitsun), Toussaint (November 1st), and Saint André (November 30th). But special meetings may be convened by the *Syndic* or the *viguiers*, should occasion demand. There are three possible forms of meeting, according to the importance of the business to be transacted. (1) A council of six members, composed of the principal *consul* of each parish. (2) A council of twelve members, composed of both *consuls* from each village. (3) The full council.

Suffrage is extended to all heads of household. There is a stipulation that such voters shall be married, but this is quite unnecessary, as an unmarried man would never be nominated as head of his house.

There are no written laws in Andorra. Petty civil cases are dealt with by the *bayles*, who act as a kind of honorary sheriff. The *bayles* give their judgment as may seem fair to them, or according to the custom of the land. When it is necessary, they consult the oldest

inhabitants with a view to discovering precedents. From what I heard, the *bayles* (who are not lawyers, but plain, honest citizens) act as conciliators rather than as judges.

If litigants are not satisfied with the decision of the

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bayles, however, they have a right of appeal. A judge of appeal is nominated for life alternately by the French Government and the Bishop of Urgel. From this judge there is a further appeal, either to the court of the Bishop or to the French court at Perpignan. In 1884 the French Government set up a special court at Per-

pignan to deal with cases from Andorra ; an exception to a general rule was made so that such cases should be heard in Catalan. But appeals are very seldom made. The Andorrans are very sensible people, and never go to law if they can settle their difficulty by any other possible method.

Criminal cases are dealt with very differently. The responsible court sits at the Casa dels Valls, and consists of the *Syndic*, the two *viguiers*, the judge of appeal, and two *concellos* nominated by the General Council to see that the judgment does not violate the privileges and customs of the republic. Legal aid is employed on both sides. The lawyer for the accused is known by the delightfully appropriate name of *rahanator*, or talker—which is far more expressive than the old English description of " pleader."

The responsibility for the maintenance of order and the arrest of criminals lies with the *viguiers* collectively —in theory, at any rate. In practice, the Bishop's *viguier*, being an Andorran and resident in the country, does most of the work. If the offence is light, he deals with the case himself ; but if it be a graver matter he requests the assistance of his colleague at Perpignan. The two *viguiers* control the police of the country. The police force consists of every able-bodied man ; there are no constables, but a whole village may be asked to give any necessary assistance. But crime in Andorra is refreshingly rare ; if the system of criminal justice were to break down, it would probably do so on account of lack of use.

Andorra is fortunate among the countries of Europe

from the financial standpoint. It is almost immune from taxation. The only taxes are on the commonly-owned pastures, and on such measures of personal wealth as cattle and corn. These taxes are of the lightest; one farmer told me that he had paid the equivalent of four shillings in the current year. Small as the revenues are, they more than balance the expenditure. Far from having a national debt, the Andorran budget shows a substantial credit balance. The only expenses are the maintenance of the Casa dels Valls, the annual tribute, the upkeep of roads, bridges, and vital mule tracks, and a few minor details. The total of State salaries amounts only to a few pounds a year, for practically all offices are unpaid. The members of the General Council may stable their mules, feed, and sleep at the Casa, but otherwise receive only a nominal allowance to cover their incidental expenses.

The archives of Andorra are not troublesome. They consist of copies of the treaties in which Andorra has figured, and of the modern records of the General Council. All are stored in the cupboard in the Casa dels Valls. The only records of births, marriages, and deaths are such as are kept by the parish priests.

Such is a brief and sketchy account of the history and constitution of one of the most interesting little States in the world. And what of the future? Will Andorra survive? The wars and revolutions that have for centuries disturbed the peace of Europe have left Andorra unchanged. Crowns have fallen, kingdoms have toppled over, republics have been proclaimed and have died away, but the oldest republic of all has taken

no heed of their passing. It would seem at first sight that Andorra's security is by this time assured; but the natives are not so certain. They view the growing interest of France and Spain with suspicion. Many of them condemn in no uncertain voice the policy which has made Andorra comparatively accessible. The road to Seo de Urgel is the subject of many a hard word. Politics in Andorra are in a very interesting state.

I have held long discussions, not only with the President, but with many members of the General Council. In most of them I found combined a very shrewd native intelligence with an appalling ignorance of the affairs of the outside world. The knowledge that their country is only an infinitesimal fraction of a vast social scheme has only just begun to dawn on them. And it is the mist that accompanies this dawning, and the gradual realization of the comparative power of France and Spain, that spreads disquietude over Andorra. Such, at least, is my diagnosis.

A member of the General Council was complaining to me of the opening-up of Andorra. He could see that the days of seclusion were gone for ever, and he was not optimistic as to the future. Our subsequent conversation revealed a confused state of mind which I found to be very general.

"But why did you allow the road to Seo de Urgel to be built?" I asked. "Or even the road from Soldeu over the Embalire?"

"Ah," he replied, "very few people in Andorra favoured either scheme. But France and the Bishop are very strong, and we could not resist."

" How was that ? " I queried. " Such proposals have been made before, but your grandfathers resisted them."

" Yes, that is true," he said; " but things are very different now. The influences of France and the Bishop are very strong."

" Precisely," I agreed, " but so long as there are *two* influences you can play with them as you please. You have been telling me about the history of your country" (he had been talking of the Carlist Wars). " Your fathers would brook no illegitimate interference with Andorra from either France or Spain. Why do you yield to them now ? "

" It is more difficult," was all he could say. " Affairs have changed. France and the Bishop are very strong."

I argued with him at some length. I quoted examples of cases where his ancestors had played off one neighbour against the other. I said that from their own history they should realize that a concession to France meant automatically a concession to Spain. If France is assisted to make a road from Soldeu to l'Hospitalet, then assuredly Spain will demand a road to Seo de Urgel. He did not dispute my arguments at all. But continually he repeated his plea that " France and the Bishop are very strong." His mind was that of a man who realizes for the first time that he is up against a mighty force, and for the moment his confidence fades before the magnitude of his task.

I am convinced that this is the key to the situation. It is only very recently that any attempt at educational progress has been made in Andorra. Even now the

interest of Andorra is almost entirely local. But a new consciousness is awaking, and it is awaking in a wrong atmosphere. There ought to be no despairing gloom in Andorra. Of course France and the Bishop are strong—overwhelmingly powerful as compared to the tiny mountain republic. But this is no new thing—this state of affairs has existed for centuries. But this preponderance did not prevent Andorra from flinging defiance to France and the Bishop alternately—and successfully—when the country's independence was threatened with violation. It is difficult to decide whether this defiance was a natural impulse born of the love of freedom or a shrewd action based on the assumption that an attack by one neighbour would automatically make an ally of the other. But whatever the reason, the essential conditions remain unchanged. Neither France nor Spain would brook undue interference on the part of the other.

A man may pass over a mountain chain without ever realizing the difficulty of his path. A thoughtful man approaching the watershed of the Pyrenees may be aghast at the thought of climbing over the vast wall that confronts him: his first impression is one of inferiority to the task—he feels like a minute creature in a gigantic world. But if he will approach the mountains with boldness and caution, he will see his way clear, and he may pass over to the other side with no more difficulty than did his more heedless fellow. This will illustrate the present position of Andorra. In times past the Andorrans have passed through precarious situations without even realizing their danger. Now a

new consciousness has arrived; France and Spain are viewed for the first time in a truer perspective, and the Andorran is dismayed. But this dismay need only be momentary—the task is no more difficult than it ever was. I used this simile often in Andorra; my hearers, being mountaineers, appreciated its meaning. Not that I think that Andorra will be the loser because the country is now more accessible. There are many good things which Andorra can extract from modern civilization without losing its own virtue; but at the same time Andorra must be very careful that she does not lose more than she gains.

It is often asserted that the Andorrans have opposed the construction of roads because it would interfere with the smuggling traffic. This is picturesque, but absurd. I never heard the argument mentioned—and smuggling is discussed quite freely, of course. The smuggling traffic in cattle has been facilitated considerably by the construction of roads. And as for smuggled tobacco and other merchandise—well, your professional contrabandist does not usually take his goods over the frontier by the principal route, whether it be metalled road or mule track.

Many idle conjectures have been made as to the probable effect upon Andorra of the opening of the new railway from Toulouse to Barcelona, which passes by l'Hospitalet. The course of the line is fully engineered, and has been completed for two or three years, but the metals have not yet been laid. Actually, until a road is made from Encamp to Soldeu, the opening of the railway will not affect Andorra to the slightest degree.

THE BRIDGE, ESCALDAS

L'Hospitalet is nearly as accessible now—by the autobus from Ax-les-Thermes—as it will be by rail, but so long as the road over the Embalire terminates at Soldeu the traffic is not likely to increase.

The question of the construction of the road between Encamp and Soldeu will probably agitate Andorran politics for some years to come. At present this stretch is the real gate of the country. You may enter Andorra by road from the south or by the north, but you cannot enter by one and leave by the other. If the road were completed, Andorra would be open to the world. There are no insuperable engineering difficulties—although a stretch of valuable agricultural land would have to be sacrificed between Encamp and Canillo. But with a direct road from north to south Andorra's seclusion would be gone for ever. The passes of the Pyrenees which are suited to motor traffic are so few that they are much used. And in case of war between France and Spain the path would offer an irresistible temptation.

I put these points of view to several members of the General Council. Some of them oppose the making of the road from sheer unreasoning conservatism. Others favour it because it would make their own transport easier. But a natural barrier is sometimes an incalculable advantage. The Channel is a decided nuisance when considered in relation to our continental trade, but in time of war it has proved an ally on innumerable occasions. The Channel may share with Trafalgar the credit of England's immunity from Napoleonic attack.

From one point of view only was I able to impress some new ideas into Andorran minds, I think; for all

the stock arguments in relation to Andorran questions have been fully explored. But I made frequent references to the League of Nations in my discussions, and I was interested to observe their effect. I have indicated that the average Andorran has little knowledge of the outside world. I asked one peasant to name the principal nations of the world. This was his list: the Castilians, the Catalans, the French, the Basques, the English, the Ameri-

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cans, and the Romans. By the latter, of course, he meant the Italians. Only a few of the richer families (whose members are usually educated in neighbouring towns in France or Spain) and the children (who are receiving a rough education infinitely better than their fathers dreamed of)—only these have any real knowledge of geography. But most of the Councillors had heard of the League of Nations; one or two even had a vague

idea of its motives. I ventured to suggest to them that the League would be very interested in Andorra, since one of its avowed objects was the protection of small nations. I pressed them, should France or Spain ever become unbearably oppressive, to ask for advice from Geneva. I felt confident that any appeal would be sympathetically received. I have often wondered if my arguments made any impression on those stolid minds. Perhaps the idea was too novel for them to grasp.

The reader will probably have gathered by now that I do not wish to see Andorra lose its independence. Of course I do not, for very many reasons. Most of these will occur at once to every Britisher, since they are the driving force of our history; but the others are local. If Andorra should by calamity lose its independence, it must either be absorbed by France or Spain or, worse still, be divided between the two. My local objections are these: the Andorrans are essentially Catalan; union with France would mean that their racial individuality would gradually disappear, just as it has done in the Roussillon. Modern France is expert at making all its peoples French in more than name. In the course of a few generations the Andorrans would cease to be Catalans and become merely French. Union with Spain would be a disaster, because the Andorran is a much better man than the Spaniard. He has no Castilian polish, but he has no Castilian vices. The Catalans of Spain are the backbone of the country. Barcelona is the headquarters of a strong separatist movement. Most Catalans are tired of carrying the rest of Spain on their backs, as they put it, and openly advocate secession from Spain.

No, although the Andorran valleys are physically Spanish, life under the excellent French administration would be better than existence under the indolent corruption of Spain. But to rob Andorra of its freedom would be an international crime.

For this freedom is real. It is often argued that Andorra is independent only in name. It is perfectly true that France and Spain, by a subtle undermining influence, seem to aim at relegating to the General Council nothing more than the powers of a County Council, but the fact remains that constitutionally Andorra is free and independent. Nominally, the principal duty of the *viguiers* is to collect the annual tribute ; after that, their legal powers are very limited. The fact that the Franco-Spanish influence does so largely dominate Andorran affairs does not affect the question of independence. Suppose Andorra chose to defy France and Spain ! Assuming that the tribute were faithfully paid, and that the constitution were observed, neither France nor Spain could legally raise a finger in protest. If Andorra chose to destroy the two roads, then the only argument which France and Spain could use would be that of force, which is no argument at all.

But times are moving apace in Andorra. Fifty years ago one could say with truth that Andorra was hundreds of years behind the rest of the western side of Europe. But now the gap is perceptibly lessened, and no one can foresee the changes which the next half-dozen generations will see. There are schools now in all the Andorran villages. Attendance is nominally compulsory, which means that the children go to school when their parents

do not require them for work in the fields. The children, of necessity, receive nothing more than an elementary education; but they are taught both French and Spanish. Now this is very important.

Under ordinary circumstances one could not emphasize too strongly the importance of learning foreign tongues. One has only to see the American floundering across Europe to realize the weakness of a one-tongued nation. But ordinary circumstances do not prevail in Andorra. From a purely utilitarian standpoint one would loudly applaud the teaching of French and Spanish; but it may prove that this point will in the end be the undoing of Andorra. The day may come when Andorra finds French and Spanish so useful that it forgets its own Catalan, and when it loses its language it will lose its nationality and probably its culture too. It is very strange to find that in Andorra—the only free Catalan State—the probable tendency seems to point to the decay of the Catalan, whereas in Barcelona, the headquarters of Catalan civilization, a determined and successful effort has been made to revive its ancient glories. Andorra must watch its educational system very, very carefully. Should it lose its language it may never have a chance—as have had Ireland and Wales—of reviving it again.

But I myself have no real fears for the future of Andorra. The rapid change of perspective has occasioned a passing phase of disillusionment and bewilderment; but the elementary spirit of the people remains and it must manifest itself. The spirit of freedom lives in the mountains; the plains may suit mere economic progress. The sturdy independence of Andorra will not falter.

But there are many problems to agitate the minds of the wise men of Andorra. I have spoken of some which have already arisen, and of others which are likely to arise in the near future. There are others. The gradual realization by the nations of the futile imbecility of a continuous wall of tariffs is bound in time to affect one of Andorra's staple industries. This will affect Andorra's prosperity, but will not weaken the State. But a second problem is more complicated. What will be Andorra's attitude when Catalonia revolts against Spain? (I shall speak later of the unrest throughout Catalonia.) The Andorrans' sympathies will naturally be with their brothers. Will they lend active aid? If so, what will be the result if Spain should win? Or suppose that Andorra remained neutral, but that defeated Catalans chose it as their refuge—this would not be at all unlikely, for Seo de Urgel is the usual site for the last stand. If Catalonia seceded from Spain, would Andorra join the new Catalan State? All this sounds fantastic and foolish supposition now. So it may be, but the chronicler of a hundred years hence will have more than one interesting chapter to add to the history of Andorra.

For myself, I think that the policy of Andorra is clearly marked. An independent republic for over a thousand years, so it should remain. And modern " civilization " should only be admitted in moderation, for it does not always bring happiness. The air of Andorra's sombre valleys is exhilaratingly free. I hope it will so remain—that there may always be a temporary refuge for a burdened soul.

CHAPTER III

THE PEOPLE OF ANDORRA

Some travellers have described the Andorrans as rude and churlish. Others use the terms " reticent " and " taciturn." The first impression is absolutely false. The Andorrans are invariably polite, though perhaps in a detached manner. The second description is superficially correct, but no more than superficially. One would not expect the art of conversation to be highly developed in such a country as Andorra. It is no unknown thing for a man to pass several weeks without speaking to one of his fellows. The population is so scattered and the work to gain a living is so hard that there is little time to be wasted in talking. Obviously, too, the subjects for conversation are very limited. It is very seldom that one finds a race of talkative mountain-dwellers. So the Andorrans are contemptuously classed as " reticent," " taciturn "—as if this character were a fault. It is not always those who talk most who have the most to say.

It is true that the Andorran seldom wastes a word. The story is told of a theological student in the near-by seminary of Seo de Urgel who was once set a translation of the description of the trials of Christ. When he came to the passage " Jesus autem tacebat," which we interpret " Jesus held His peace," he wrote down, " Paro Jesus se hacio il Andorrano " (" Jesus played the

Andorran"). The metaphor is not a bad one; but economy of speech does not necessarily imply coldness of heart and vacuity of mind.

So far as one can see, the natural characteristics of the Andorran have been grossly exaggerated by travellers who have not known a word of his language. I might easily appear to be taciturn to a Russian visitor to England—if he spoke to me only in Russian. It is my experience—and by no means mine alone—that the Andorran will talk, and talk freely, if you will take the trouble to gain his confidence. A smile comes to his lips far more readily than a scowl. Talk to him about things he understands, and talk to him in his own language, then you will not find that the conversation languishes,

One night I heard voices singing in an obscure corner of an Andorran village. Guided by the sound, I found a dozen or fifteen young men and girls, seated on rough stools in the ground or stable floor of a house. I joined the group as unostentatiously as possible. Remember that this was really rude—I could not have complained had I received a cold reception; but they were merely polite, in that casual way which one soon learns to associate with Catalonia. I explained that I was very interested in folk-songs—would they oblige me by continuing? They consented without enthusiasm, and a young man struck up a song. But the fire had gone from the singing; the harmony was disturbed. Several members of the group eyed me furtively—foreigners are rare in Andorra. I started humming the tune with them; this seemed to reassure the more bashful of the singers. After the song was finished, I asked a few questions as to its

meaning, for the Catalan was archaic and idiomatic. Two of the young men strained the bounds of their vocabulary in rendering the song into terms which I could understand. At my request they commenced to sing another song. Again I joined in the tune ; it was a very simple one, and soon I was singing heartily. The singing was regaining its old life—evidently I was being accepted as one of themselves. Then I played my trump card. Would they care to hear an English folk-song ? I asked. Assent came from every side. Still seated on my stool, I sang " My Boy Billy " from beginning to end. I have never had a more interested audience. Would I sing it again ? Certainly, and perhaps they would care to sing the tune with me. And so they did. In Andorra all the folk airs are passed on from generation to generation by oral methods, so that I was not surprised to find that they picked up the tune without hesitation. At their request we sang it time after time; the absence of words meant nothing to them. Then they must needs teach me some of their own folk-songs, which was exactly what I wanted. And I had to sing many more English songs. I sang " Oh, no, John," " Dashing away with the Smoothing Iron," and even " On Ilkla Moor 'bart 'at." They enjoyed them, but " My Boy Billy " remained the favourite, and we sang it again even after someone had remarked that it was one o'clock. And so we parted—with many thanks on my part, and invitations to return on theirs.

As I was shaving next morning, I saw a young muleteer setting out from the village. He timed his whistling so that the mule's feet beat time to the tune

of " My Boy Billy." I should not be at all surprised if some local laureate does not fit some words to the air, and thus lay the foundations of a pretty problem for a future Cecil Sharp who may visit Andorra about two centuries hence.

I know of no other country where folk-song forms such a large proportion of the national music. The " popular " song which sweeps over France and Spain, as soon as America and England have finished with it, is unknown in Andorra. Most of the dance music is as traditional as are the Scottish pipe airs. Sometimes, on very special occasions, a dance band from Barcelona has visited Andorra and has played some of the latest tunes. But most of the Andorrans stand by, not knowing what steps they should use. I can commend their decision, for the folk-tunes of the Pyrenees are of a very high quality. Often the words are crude and gaunt, as one might expect from an austere and illiterate race; but sometimes one is surprised at the delicacy of thought and feeling which flows through the song. One does not look for pretty ideas from the rough Catalan, yet some of his songs proffer a new insight into his mind. Here is a literal translation of a very popular Catalan folk-song, " La nina d'Urbanya."

1. On the twenty-fifth of July, a new song has been written about a young girl that there is, who is a girl of Urbanya. She is beautiful as an angel.

2. Her hairs are golden threads ; for me they are nails and chains. They hold my heart nailed ; they hold me enchained. I would die for her.

3. I wish to speak to her father, and also to her mother.

And if they consent to give her to me—if they wish to bestow her upon me—then I would wish to marry her.

4. " Gallant and amorous youth (says the father), the girl is already promised. Go to him (the other man) yourself. If you can make him change his mind, I will promise her to you."

(Here a verse is missing, but the " other man " evidently refuses to give up his fiancée. So the song continues :)

5. I will become a student—a student of literature. I will become a priest. Then I can confess her, and I will not inflict any penitence upon her.

6. And when she goes to church she will think of all that has passed. She will lift her eyes to the sky and will say, " You know my thoughts. Never more will I make a promise."

It is difficult to reconcile the rough, shrewd Catalan with the delicate beauty of the idea which prompted the singer to become a priest, so that he need inflict no penitences on his loved one. But Catalan nature does not show itself well on the surface. A superficial glance is seldom an accurate one. There is an artistic spring in the Catalan soul ; no man could live in such mountains and not have a poetic touch.

The Andorrans are passionately fond of singing and dancing. These are the only forms of pleasurable relaxation which are possible to them. Wherever young people are gathered together, there will be singing ; the only known form of set entertainment is a dance. Whether it be a saint's day or a wedding that is to be celebrated, the religious ceremony is invariably followed by a dance. There is no difficulty about a hall—every village has its little square, and *alpagatas* make good dancing-shoes on gravel or stone. There may be a little

difficulty about the music. The traditional instruments of the Andorrans are a crude kind of bagpipe and an equally crude guitar ; but one sees little of these nowadays. The piano is almost unknown ; I tried to find one to assist me in making notes of folk-tunes, but could not trace one in the whole country. But there are one or two men who have a violin, or a flute, or even a cornet. The latter is particularly valuable for open-air work. But the Andorrans are an adaptable people ; in their wild valleys they are accustomed to doing without things, and so, if they are unable to find an instrumentalist, they simply do without. They will dance while humming a tune in unison, or by tapping out the time on the floor. It may be crude, but they will dance.

The children play less in Andorra than in most countries ; their life is too hard. But when they play they play at a dance. In a corner of a hamlet I saw not more than ten children. One had a concertina, another a pair of cymbals. Most of the notes of the concertina were dumb for ever, only a few emitted an asthmatical cough, but that did not matter. It was music, and the other children danced to it.

A Catalan dance is always worth seeing, and if you stay in Catalonia for seven days you are almost bound to see one. Every Sunday evening, in the main street or square of every village of any size, you may confidently anticipate a dance. They do not vary much ; one is much the same as another. I saw my first Catalan dance a few days before I first reached Andorra. I reproduce my notes :

Assuredly the *señor* should be awakened at five o'clock in the morning. With a thirty-mile tramp over the mountains before him, it was necessary that he should start at a very good hour. His Honour might be assured. . . . In the meantime, if His Honour wished for a little diversion, there was to be a dance in the village. Ah, yes, the *señor* would like to see it. Where to go ? Ah, His Honour had but to step into the street . . . so . . . .

I step into the street, mildly excited. I have read of a Catalan dance, I have seen pictures of it ; but now I am to see the real thing. The street is almost deserted, for it is but nine o'clock, and we are in Spain. It is an hour before the folks begin to gather. The band marches down the street, playing merrily—three fiddles, a trumpet, and clarionet. I see a double bass in the offing, but assuredly he cannot march while he plays. Even the violins must find it difficult. Ah, the band returns to the door of the hotel. A brief halt—for the night is warm—and they make their way to the little balcony. Yes, the double bass has joined them. We are ready to start.

I look down the street. All the young men stand on one side, the girls on the other. Here is segregation of the sexes in the absolute. All wear *alpagatas*—not a pair of shoes can I see. But where are the quaint and crude costumes of the pictures ? Many of these frocks would not disgrace the Paseo de Gracia. Ah, the band has started. The atmosphere is charged with shyness. The young men glance cautiously at the maidens ; the maidens gaze fixedly at their feet. But one brave spirit makes the first move, and seeks his partner. Another follows, and another. Soon twenty couples are moving to the rhythm of the music. See, there are some young children—mere babies ! Surely it is time they were in bed ! But with what natural grace they move—such ease must be inherited, not acquired.

Ah, the band stops. The couples, arm-in-arm, walk round and round in a circle, after the fashion of the Jolly Miller. It is not the custom to demand encores—the band supplies

them as a matter of course. The dance begins afresh—those children really are delightful.

After the dance the sexes sort themselves out once more. Presumably this unnatural modesty will wear off later in the evening. (It does !)

The halts are short and the dances are long, which is as it should be. But why does the band play so slowly ? And are the fiddles playing ?—I hear nothing but the trumpet. What a calamity it would be if the trumpet were to burst ! By this time all the men are dancing, but a few girls remain on the opposite pavement. Even here, it seems, the feminine element predominates.

There is one girl who sits opposite me—why does no one ask her to dance ? She has such bright eyes ; but those eyes will soon droop if she sits alone much longer. She is quite a pretty girl, too. Surely someone will claim her now. But no, another dance has started. I wonder if—— But no, I must not think of it. I am no dancer, and these steps are strange to me.

But this one looks simple enough—merely walking backwards and forwards. I wonder if I dare ? Yes . . . oh, what a grateful flash from those bright eyes ! Yes, I am lucky—the dance is quite simple. All I have to do is to avoid colliding with other couples or with the pavement. But I manage quite nicely. Now the Jolly Miller, then the dance again, and afterwards those bright eyes flash once more as my partner retires to her seclusion. But she does not stay long. A girl cannot dance with an English *señor* without attracting notice. I see a young fellow in rough tweeds approach her. They dance together. Maybe I have laid the foundations of a Catalan romance—who knows ?

But what is happening ? Ah, here come Juan and Marcella, whispers my host. Now we shall see dancing—they are divine ! Yes, they are married—he married her for her dancing, so they say. Watch them as they go—the other dancers fade into the shadows. Juan impatiently signals to

the band to increase their funereal tempo. Ah, now I recognize the tango they are playing. And I watch lithe bodies swaying in perfect harmony, with consummate grace and ease. How Juan and Marcella would put a cabaret turn to shame!

Yes, very interesting, very interesting. But I must to bed. (Up at five o'clock—thirty miles over the mountains!) Surely those children ought to go to bed too. But what is this? Why, of course, the band sits in the balcony of my hotel—the double bass is just outside my window. Still, I get into bed. But the music is not a lullaby. All I can hear is the double bass, except when the trumpet gets a particularly good note. But the bass does not soothe me. No sooner have I got used to his monotonous oom-pom, oom-pom, than he changes it to some other more or less rhythmic combination—or even inserts an obbligato of his own composition.

Good gracious! Midnight, and still they go on! And I must be up at five! This is too much. These old-fashioned dances are delightful, but there is a limit! Surely that man must burst his trumpet soon! And I am certain that those children ought to be in bed.

If I cannot sleep, I may as well watch. Ah, I am just in time to see the *sardana*. This is really Catalan—primitive and unrestrained. See the *pasos costos*—now the *pasos largos*. Ah, and the finale—the *salto*—how like the effervescent jig! See those shoulders moving up and down, hear those feet beating quick time on the hard ground! Yes, this is the real thing. I am glad that I did not go to sleep, after all.

One o'clock, and the dance is over. I may go to sleep now, if I will (thirty miles over the mountains!). But perhaps the *criado* will forget to call me at five—they do these things so well in Spain. But, under the circumstances, he shall not forfeit his *propina*.

Except for the personal incidents, this description

might apply to any Andorran dance. I saw them dancing in the triangular " square " of St. Julian de Loria; the occasion was a religious festival of some kind. All the people from the neighbouring valleys were there. A fringe of *tartanes* lined one side of the square, and mules munched their rations and gazed contemptuously at the scene. A rough wooden platform with a canvas shelter had been erected in the centre of the open space. Here sat the band, together with the two *consuls* of St. Julian. Great men these; for was not St. Julian at one time capital of Andorra? Even now St. Julian is nearer to the Spanish frontier than is Andorra-la-Viella, and those little nightly excursions which are so profitable—well, St. Julian is the favourite starting-place. But you will get no thrill as you gaze around the throng. Smugglers? Yes, you could hardly pick out the wrong man—you could challenge any or all. But these rubicund, open faces do not seem to conform with the stories so popular in boyhood's days. That young fellow there—he wears cloth trousers, a bright blue cotton shirt, a hat of straw plait half an inch thick, and a continual smile—you would never imagine that his principal delight was the evasion of frontier guards. At present he is more interested in his dancing partner. She is worth looking at. She is no beauty, but she looks clean. Except that she is lean, she radiates the same atmosphere as does the English dairymaid. Her skin is clear and healthy; alas, that it will so soon become swarthy and wrinkled! Women age rapidly in Andorra.

St. Julian is famed in Andorra for its dancing. For centuries accessible from Spain, it has always been sus-

ceptible to Spanish influence. Its local musicians pride themselves on their modernity. One tune they played seemed familiar to me. I found that it was a Charleston from a current Barcelona revue.

Everyone dances at St. Julian. Even the grandfathers will totter round the square just once, for old times' sake. But the young people dance continuously. I watched them as I talked to their parents.

A talk with an Andorran is always interesting because the point of view is so novel. There are, of course, a very limited number of Andorrans who have received a fairly good education in France or Spain. But most of the older generation are almost illiterate, and a grown-up who can read and write is classed as well educated. A very shrewd native intelligence, however, makes up for a good deal. Coupled with this is an almost childlike ignorance of things in the world outside. Probably 90 per cent. of Andorrans never move beyond their own or the neighbouring valleys. In the winter, when the northern valleys are completely snowed up and work is at a standstill, a few of their men go to work in Spain. Some go to Lerida, and others to Ripoll. One man told me that he went every winter to Barcelona; he was considered in the village to be a great traveller, and his opinion was sought on all foreign questions. But I do not suppose you would find fifty people in Andorra who have ever seen the sea. You would find at least five thousand (the population is less than 5,500) who have never seen a railway train. Plenty have never seen a wheeled vehicle of any description—not even the humble *tartane*.

LOS BONS

When you talk to the Andorran, therefore, you must talk as to an intelligent man with the knowledge of a child. This does not imply condescension—the last attitude to adopt in Andorra. You must talk to them simply and directly, and about things they understand.

The Andorran, if approached tactfully, will always answer your questions and talk about ordinary things. It is not so easy to persuade him to open his heart. This can only be done by what the films call " human interest." The two best methods are (1) the smile and (2) children. The first often succeeds, for the sympathetic smile is a sign of human friendship; but the second will be successful even if the first fails.

I walked one evening in an Andorran hamlet, deliberately seeking a conversation. Through a doorway I perceived a little stack of newly baked bread; the lady of the house came to the door as I passed. I smiled. Alas, she must have thought I grinned! I made complimentary remarks about the bread. I asked interested questions. Did she make it herself? Maize flour was used, was it not? Was this a week's supply? She replied politely, but not with any verbosity. I felt that I was making no headway. The lady was perfectly civil, but I got the impression that she would not die of a broken heart when I took my departure. Then a little girl came along —a youngster of about ten or twelve years, neatly dressed in the eternal print frock. Eagerly I seized my chance. I talked to the little girl and to the mother about the little girl. I asked the little girl eventually if she had ever tasted English chocolate. She had not, of course, but she very soon did, and found it good beyond

her wildest dreams. Ten minutes later I was invited to step inside the house, and two hours passed before I came out again.

I particularly remember the evening because the man of the house had a remarkably wide knowledge of the legends of the valleys; I have quoted one or two of them elsewhere. He told the stories well, with a simple directness that had a dramatic effect. By this time the whole family had gathered by the fire in the kitchen—the man of the house, his wife, two parents, and three children. After a polite hint, I tried my hand at story-telling, too. I even told one or two funny stories—which is an exhausting test of one's command of any language. True, I had to stop occasionally to explain the point, but I got my laughs at the proper places. I told some fairy stories to the children, too. You may tell the story of the Three Bears to the children of any country and be certain of its reception; it is seldom entirely unknown to them. The man of the house and I took it in turns to tell our stories. I had the last turn, and I chose the everlasting story of Faust and Marguerite. I put all I knew into the telling of the story. I could feel that I was getting a hold over these simple people. The old grandfather leaned forward that he might not miss a word. The little girl slipped her hand into mine. I saw an older girl trembling with thrill as I described Marguerite in prison. These eternal stories do not have their bases on insecure foundations; you can tell them anywhere. The last light had long gone, the fire had flickered out. For five minutes after the story was finished the silence was only broken by the

rush of the torrent outside. No one thought to put on a light, for which I was glad. It would have spoiled all had we seen the damp corners of each other's eyes. I shook hands almost without a word, and my host guided me over the rough path to my lodging.

OLD MAN

Maybe I shall never see that little family again, but I shall not forget them—and I hope that they will not forget me.

The legends of Andorra are simple but full of dramatic effect. Every mountain has its story, and every

mountain torrent is the subject of a tale which has been handed down through countless generations. Some legends are now available only in fragmentary form, but plenty of them tell a complete story. One of the best known in all Andorra is the legend of the Cascada d'Auvina, which leaps down to the Valira near the Spanish frontier, half-way between Urgel and St. Julian de Loria. Many, many years ago, so the story goes, a certain Bishop of Urgel oppressed the Andorrans greatly. Taking the greatest advantage of his shadowy authority, he interfered in Andorran business on all possible occasions. It is usually remarked that his interest was not in the welfare of the Andorrans, but in the prosperity of the Bishop. Now in a watch-tower near the border lived an Andorran family who for centuries were the guardians of the southern border. At the time of the incursions of the Bishop, however, the sole representative of the family was a lady; but she resolved to carry out the traditions of the family. Intercepting the Bishop as he rode up the valley on his fat mule, she boldly forbade him entry. With a contemptuous gesture —and possibly with an appropriate remark—the Bishop passed on. At this point the legend divides into several versions. In some the lady dies immediately; in others her demise is postponed to a later stage in the story. The first makes a more fluent narrative.

The Bishop continued his frequent unwelcome excursions into Andorra. But one night he was riding with two attendants. It was a beautiful moonlight night; the little party stopped to admire the waterfall, its foam gleaming in the bright rays of the moon. Then, by the

side of the cascade, suddenly appeared the figure of a beautiful White Lady—the Guardian of the Frontier. Smiling sweetly, she beckoned to the Bishop to follow her. He hesitated, and was lost. The two attendants would have liked to follow too, but their feet were fixed to the ground by some invisible force—a most uncomfortable state of affairs. The White Lady, followed rapidly by the Bishop, disappeared into the forest. What happened there no one will ever know, for the Bishop would never say. From subsequent history, however, it would appear the lady took the opportunity of a *tête-à-tête* to rate him soundly. It was two hours before the Bishop returned—probably to the great relief of his attendants, whose feet must have ached considerably.

For many years the Bishop remained in his own town, and visited Andorra no more. As time wore on his old instincts began to reassert themselves : he felt that he must revive his old interests in Andorra. But some recollection of the White Lady's warning, whatever it was, remained instilled in his mind, so he did not journey to Andorra himself, but sent successive representatives. Each of these was a priest, of course, and each had an encounter with the White Lady. In some cases the White Lady contented herself with merely telling them exactly what she thought about them. In others the conversation appears to have been somewhat indelicate, and even the Bishop's name was not sacred on her lips. None of the priests, however, came to any physical harm, so the fears of the Bishop began to subside. An important crisis then arose in Andorran affairs. If his influence were to hold, he must attend the Council

in person. He set out on his mule—and was never seen again.

The sequel is illogical, which is very good circumstantial evidence in favour of the genuineness of the legend. After the disappearance of the Bishop, a lonely wolf prowled about the little ravine of Auvina, helping itself to an occasional sheep from the local flocks. Its appetite was so enormous that the shepherds went forth in a body to shoot it, but their guns were antique and their aim was bad. In despair, they appealed to the *Syndic*. The President was then, as now, an essentially practical man. He armed himself with the most modern weapon in Andorra, and slew the wolf the same night. Unfortunately, the brave President fell ill almost immediately afterwards. He was particularly troubled with violent dreams, which left him in a state of collapse. The doctors could do nothing for him. Then one night the White Lady appeared to him, and he appealed to her to cure him. Sadly she shook her head. " Alas, I cannot," she said. " I could deliver Andorra from the power of the Bishop, but I cannot deliver thee; for the wolf that thou killedst was he." With this exceedingly frigid comfort she vanished, and the poor *Syndic* died.

There are several morals to be drawn from such a story as this. The obvious one is that bishops should not follow White Ladies into forests on moonlight nights. Further, people ought not to meddle unduly in other folk's affairs. Quite frankly, I am unable to find a satisfactory interpretation of the last part of the story. I think that the President has a distinct grievance. Everyone will agree that the Bishop deserved his fate,

but the President was doing no more than his duty. Even in those days it was a crime to shoot a bishop, I suppose. But when a bishop is disguised as a wolf, helping himself freely to sheep, I venture to submit that no jury would convict on the evidence.

But what interested me far more than the story itself was its place in the Andorran mind. To some of the people it is nothing but a story—a pretty little fable. Others know that it is only a story, but have some kind of subconscious feeling that there is some essence of reality in it. And there are Andorrans who believe the whole tale implicitly. To them the White Lady of Auvina is the Andorran Joan of Arc. She is a symbol of the fight against the power of Urgel. The story of the White Lady is mentioned by Mr. F. H. Deverell, one of the first Englishmen to visit Andorra, but it is very freely quoted in the country to-day, when the struggle against greater powers is harder than ever.

Only among a superstitious race, of course, would it be possible to find people who would accept such a story at its face value; and the Andorrans are as superstitious to-day as were the English in mediæval times. It is very, very difficult to comprehend a mentality which will repose blind trust in signs and omens, in wishing-wells and lucky stones. Many of the superstitions are intimately connected with the religion of the people; they are Roman Catholics almost without exception. The priests encourage rather than disparage the old beliefs. Looking at things from their point of view, I do not blame them at all. They could not possibly ignore this peculiar trait in the characters of their people.

The advance to reason must be made very gradually. Even Andorrans who are comparatively well educated will confess belief in some absurd sign which appears childlike to a foreign mind. England, one of the most advanced countries of the world, is by no means free from superstition. One does not wonder, therefore, when one finds the cult deeply engrained in Andorra, which is generations behind the mental times.

I spent a Christmas Eve with a peasant family. The man was active and intelligent, though quite uneducated. We talked of Christmas legends and customs—a never-failing source of interest. I noticed that the stories were very real to him. Among others, he mentioned the ubiquitous legend—one of the most charming in Christmas lore—of the cows and sheep bowing to the east at midnight on Christmas Eve. Reason tempted me to argue where sympathy ought to have restrained me. It was a very pretty story, I said, but it was only to be taken symbolically ; it was not literally true, of course. The eyes of my host blazed with anger. Of course it was true, he said. Why should it not be true ? I asked if he had ever seen it happen ; this was a logical question, but I regretted it later. No, he had not seen it, but he knew that it did. We argued for some time. It seemed to me that he was sufficiently intelligent to learn to take legends at their true worth—a very real and honest worth. So I suggested a practical test. It was Christmas Eve, and wanted but an hour to midnight. There were sheep in the barn—why should we not go and see for ourselves ? He agreed with absolute confidence. We sat quietly by the door of the barn and waited. An hour

passed ; my friend's eyes gleamed into the darkness, but there was no movement among the sheep. The minutes passed and the brightness died from his eyes. Another hour dragged by, and another. Then I led him back to the house, for he was sobbing like a child.

I gazed at him in consternation. I think that I was able to imagine the state of his mind. All substance had disappeared from beneath his flow of thought. He was heartbroken, and I was exceedingly troubled. I have never felt so mean and small in my life, for I had done a very terrible thing : I had destroyed a man's belief without giving him anything in its place. Such an offence is without pardon.

An inspiration saved his peace of mind—and mine. There is no sight more distressing than that of a strong man in tears, and I was feeling its effects when I remembered that controversies had raged over the probable date of Christ's birth. Quickly I put the case to my friend. The Christmas that we celebrated was an artificial date, I said. We did not know the real date, but it certainly could not fall during the winter, since the shepherds spent the night with their flocks. He grasped this point at once. I explained that scholars believed that the actual date was late in April. Immediately my friend's assurance was restored. If we could only know the true date, he said, we should find that the sheep did bow the knee to the east at midnight. I did not argue. Within a few minutes he was rating me soundly for my unbelief. But I bore his reproaches willingly. I had had my lesson, and was ready to pay for it. I had learned with a shock that material logic may prove things, but may destroy

happiness. I had learned that true and lasting progress in the mind is made at the speed of the tortoise and not of the hare.

Superstition retreats as education advances; and education in Andorra was primitive until a few years ago. The Andorran woman who is childless will go with faith to a wishing-well or a noted shrine, quite confident of the success of her appeal. Sometimes, of course, the course of nature so ordains it that her wish is granted; then she is not slow to proclaim the efficacy of the charm. Should her mission fail, she will blame herself for some unknown fault rather than cast doubt on the power of the well.

In England the Easter egg has descended from the sphere of religion to that of the confectioner's shop. But it is not so in Andorra. The egg plays a large part in many superstitious customs in Andorra. The young man or maid who wishes for a happy marriage will visit the churchyard at midnight on Midsummer Day, and will cut an egg in half at the hour. And this ceremony is not performed as a joke.

Not less strange is the custom which is observed whenever an Andorran is murdered—happily a very rare occasion. The Bishop's *viguier* and the *bayles* are, of course, immediately sent for. Standing by the dead man, the *viguier* repeats the words of a formula which probably had its origin in some apparent " miracle " of mediæval times.

" Dead man, who has killed thee? " he demands in a loud voice. The attendant audience eagerly await the answer, which never comes.

WAYSIDE CROSS

" Dead man, rise up, and let justice be done," commands the *viguier*. His word is unheeded—which is perhaps just as well, or the number of canonized saints might be largely increased. But then the *viguier* pronounces words which indicate to the waiting relatives that all hope is finally abandoned.

" He is dead who does not reply ! "

I have never seen this ceremony performed, for the last murder committed in Andorra was nearly half a century ago; but no one doubts its efficacy. It is the first and most important step to be taken by the *viguier*, who acts as the detective in charge of the case. Scotland Yard might care to note.

It is very difficult to say where superstition ends and religion begins in Andorra. There is only one Church in the land, of course ; if you are not a Roman Catholic, you cannot be anything else. This, I think, is a factor which contributes to the weakness of Catholic countries. The recent failure of democracy in Spain and Italy can be traced to this source. If a Spaniard cannot believe in certain tenets of the Roman Church while still remaining an ardent Christian, he becomes an outcast, and is classed as an atheist. Naturally, his sympathies are alienated, and his country does not profit. We have only to study the map of Europe to note the comparative progress of the countries where the Reformation found a home.

The Catholicism of Andorra belongs to the Middle Ages—one must emphasize this in order to be fair to the priests. It is true that the modern intellectual development of Andorra has been comparatively rapid, but

SANTA COLOMA

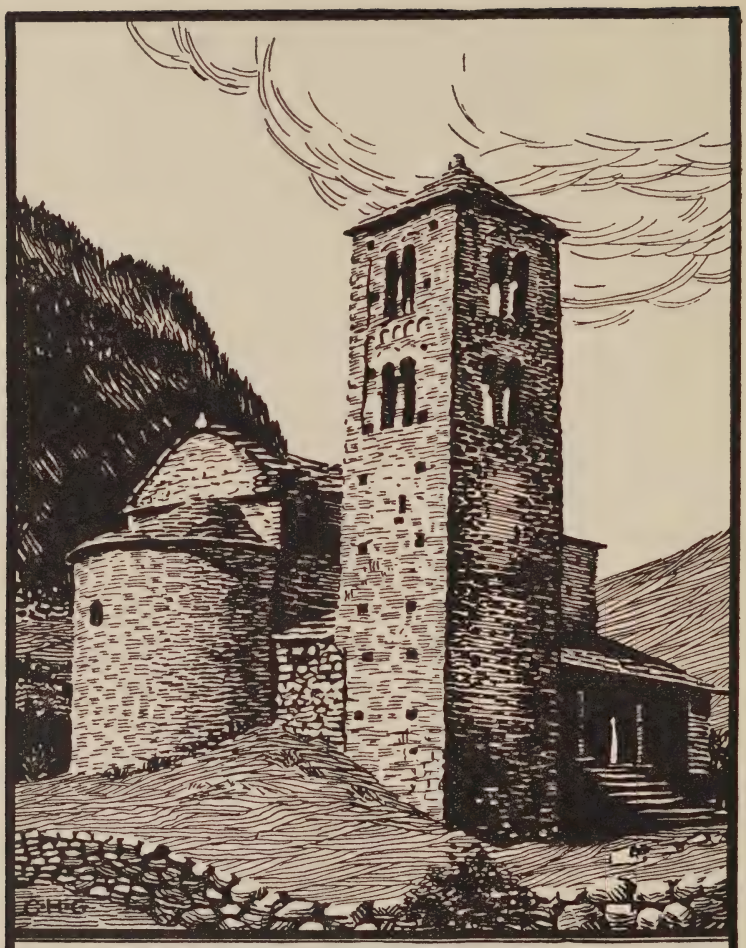
until the present generation simplicity of thought and outward ceremony were all that could possibly have any appeal. An image has a meaning for people who cannot read. A crucifix may conjure up a vivid picture, independent of a printed page. In Andorra the wayside shrines are legion. Tiny, simple little structures many of them are, crudely constructed of stone hacked from the mountain-side. Their doll-like images repose on garishly decorated altars, whose vivid colours hit the eye. There are some larger chapels—like those of San Juan or Sta Coloma—which are guarded by a ragged priest, who lives on the votive offerings of passing muleteers, or on the presents which women bring when on a pilgrimage. At Sta Coloma you may observe that the infant Christ on the altar is clothed in garments intended for a human child. These have been placed here with loving trust by some Andorran mother-to-be, who will sacrifice the choicest article of her layette to solicit the favour of the greatest Mother of all.

The parish priest is a man of great influence, but it cannot be claimed that Andorra is really priest-ridden. I talked with several of the priests of Andorra and found them to be of a class infinitely superior to that which prevails over the Spanish border. They were all Andorran-born, and very anxious for the welfare of their country—second only to the welfare of their Church and the Bishop of Urgel. They are consulted by their parishioners on all kinds of details—from family matters to agricultural problems. The priest in Andorra must know a good deal about mountain farming, mule driving, and even smuggling ; otherwise his influence

would soon decline. The Andorrans are nothing if not practical, and the priest must be practical too.

Between Encamp and Canillo is the shrine of Notre Dame de Meritzell, the patron saint of Andorra. There is a legend to the effect that this saint once delivered Andorra from enemy attack, but I was unable to gather any details of that happy event. The pilgrimage to her shrine is the principal annual religious festival in Andorra.

I sat one evening in the living-room of a peasant cottage. Without so much as a knock at the door, a neighbour entered, carrying a box on the lid of which a cross was rudely carved. Instantly the conversation was hushed; the *cap de casa*—the head of the house—took the box gravely, while the woman cleared a space on a wooden dresser in a corner of the room. The daughter of the house appeared with candles. The box was placed in the position of honour on the dresser, and one side was removed. A miniature shrine was revealed. Candles were lighted before it—one for each member of the family. Every person in the room knelt before the shrine. It was crude enough, this representation of the *Sagrada Familia*. Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus were roughly carved in wood and painted in glaring elementary colours. The intrinsic value of the whole thing might have been half a crown, but to these people it represented more than wealth. I could not but be impressed by their sincerity. The ceremonies meant little to me, and would never affect my emotion; but to these people the next twenty-four hours were one continual service, so long as the shrine remained under their guardianship.



SAN JUAN DE CASELLES

There is a great deal to be said for the home shrine. I do not mean from the purely material point of view—such would not appeal to a Protestant temperament. But the easiest fault in the world is to preach a noble ideal—even to practise it abroad, but to fall far short of it at home. How many people will worship in all sincerity in a church, but fail to apply any Christian principle to their own home life? How many politicians apply in their own homes the high principles they blazon to the world? We are all shams to a smaller or larger extent; but one of the safest judgments of a man is that which is based on his home life.

I wonder what the priests of Andorra will do during the next fifty years? A great deal depends on them. Now that some form of elementary education has been introduced, ideas will move forward in Andorra. The attitude of the priests will determine whether the religious history of Andorra is to be a repetition of that of France.

I know of no modern country wherein the family tie is so strong as in Andorra. The only parallel I can recall is the patrician family of ancient Rome. We in England pride ourselves on our love for our family; in France the family unit is even more complete, but in Andorra the family is a man's first and last consideration. The State and the constitution are deliberately built up on the unity and continuity of the family. The *cap de casa* is the Andorran unit. He votes on behalf of the family; he alone of the family is eligible for election to any of the councils of the State or parish; he is automatically a member of the militia; he is held responsible for the

good conduct of his family. His authority is very real, and his word is law among his own household. The modern relaxation of parental control is unknown in Andorra.

The *cap de casa* nominates his successor at the first convenient opportunity—that is to say, as soon as a son has proved himself worthy of the honour. The *hereu*, or heir, is usually, but not necessarily, the eldest son. Should he prove unworthy, he may be passed over in favour of a younger son, at the father's discretion. The *hereu* has no rights, however, until he becomes *cap de casa* in fact. He may not attain this dignity until the death of his father, but it is customary for the father to relinquish the title and rights to his *hereu* when he feels the years advancing upon him. Thereafter the house and land belong to the son, and the father remains there as an honoured guest. The land may not be divided between sons ; such a course would mean a continued subdivision of land quite impossible in a country with so limited an area of arable soil.

The lot of a younger son, or *concho*, is not a happy one. A man without house and land has no privileges or prospects. The *concho* has but four choices. He may marry an heiress—the eldest girl of a family which includes no sons. The *concho* is then nominated as *hereu* by his father-in-law. Unfortunately for the Andorran younger son, the supply of heiresses is extremely limited.

The priesthood is a favourite profession for Andorran *conchos*. Just as it used to be customary for the English younger son to go to sea, so his Andorran prototype is often sent to the ecclesiastical seminary at Urgel. Up to

twenty youths a year are disposed of in this manner. This is really a remarkable proportion of the total population of Andorra. Not all of them eventually become priests, for some find that the calling has no attractions when examined at close quarters. But it is certain, at any rate, that Andorra is noted for the priests it supplies to northern Spain. Even so far afield as Tarragona I met a priest of Andorran birth.

The third choice of the *concho* is not an attractive one. He may, if he wishes, remain in his brother's house. He is virtually a servant, dependent on the head of the house for everything. Since he has no home or money of his own, marriage is impracticable to him. I was not surprised to find that many younger sons refuse to adopt this course, and prefer their final choice—emigration to France or Spain. Every year a number of Andorrans say good-bye to their country. It is a pity, but it cannot be helped. It is an indisputable fact that Andorra reached its saturation point in regard to population hundreds of years ago. The population has not varied materially since the first available records were made. The area available for cultivation is limited, and is already fully exploited. The very mountain-sides have been terraced to provide additional acres. A population of five or six thousand is the absolute maximum that the country can possibly support. Any addition to that figure means privation for all. So it is that Andorra recognized something of Malthusian principles of population some centuries ago. The solution was easy in this case, since neither France nor Spain objected to Andorran immigrants, for the Andorran is a better man than his

neighbours on either side; he is fonder of work and vigorous, and seldom fails to make good.

The relations between the sexes in Andorra are vastly different from those prevailing in the Gallic or Castilian provinces. The Andorran is not amorous. He respects his women-folk, but seldom spares them. The women of Andorra work as hard as the men—possibly harder. Women, of course, have no political rights, and there is no sign of any demand for them. They seem to be content with their lot, and intermix their work in the house with manual labour in the fields.

An Andorran courtship is a decorous affair. The initial advances are usually made by the parents of the interested parties. Should preliminary negotiations be satisfactory, the young people are sounded as to their feelings before details of dowry and marriage settlements are discussed. Then the couple may commence their courtship in earnest. It is a sluggish process: the man is invariably shy, and usually commences by showing his lady-love some small extra favour at a village dance. At no time does his head seem to be carried away by his heart. "Slow, but sure," is his motto, and he seems to favour steady affection rather than passionate love.

In practice, the Andorran marriage system works out extremely well. It is not nearly so mercenary as the French style, for the fathers are almost invariably certain of the trend of feelings of their children before the first overtures are made. In so small a country as Andorra, everyone knows the business of everyone else. If a youth favours a girl at a dance, the fact is instantly remarked

and becomes common property at once. Since frank speech is common, and members of a family have no secrets from each other, it is a very easy thing for a *cap de casa* to find out his children's wishes in regard to marriage. He does this while the ideas are in an elementary stage, and then decides whether they shall be encouraged or immediately suppressed. Since the head of the house controls the succession, marriage without parental consent is unknown.

The Andorran is an excellent husband from the point of view of fidelity. There is no law to deal with divorce, nor is one necessary. Unofficial association between the sexes is rare; an illegitimate child is considered a disgrace to the State, and immediately after birth is hurried over the frontier to the foundling home at Urgel. Its maintenance there is the responsibility of its family, or, failing that, of the State. Under no circumstances can an illegitimate child enjoy any civil rights in Andorra. Prostitution is unknown throughout the State.

The people of Andorra fall far below classical standards of beauty. The young women are very often plain, but have a clean-cut face which has a quality of its own; for the Andorran visage is attractive, if only for its frank countenance. The Catalan is often represented as a man full of guile; the description may fit the race in general, but cannot apply to the Andorran. Although the features are not cut on Grecian lines, they are clean and regular. But the Andorrans could rival the Greeks in their easy carriage. Every Andorran is an athlete. He lives his life under conditions where only the hardiest could survive; he is controlled by physical features

which demand physique and stamina. The Andorran has both. He will laugh at a day's journey which leaves an English athlete tired. He climbs mountains as easily as

AN ANDORRAN BEAUTY

he walks along a level path. He carries not an ounce of superfluous flesh. I have not seen a fat man in Andorra. My own size occasioned continuous comment. Even my enemies would not call me fat—I turn the scale at

thirteen and a half stones—but I was very large for Andorra. I was often asked how it was done. One man carefully measured the breadth of my shoulders in finger spans, and compared it with his own. Several men asked me if all Englishmen were as large as myself; yet among half a dozen Englishmen I would not be noticed. I saw but one woman with obesic tendencies, and she was an object of wonder for miles around.

The consistent leanness of the Andorrans does not imply any lack of appetite. I believe it is true that every race eats more than is necessary; but I am always amused at the Continental complacency which assumes that the Englishman is the glutton of Europe. Because the Englishman likes to sit down before a good solid steak, it is argued he is a disgusting over-eater. The Continental overlooks the fact that his own meal of innumerable courses amounts to a larger quantity in the end than does the English dinner. The Catalan proves no exception. I sat down one evening in an hotel at Urgel, and was served with the customary table-d'hôte dinner. I had had a most energetic day and felt tremendously hungry. Yet such was the profusion of courses and the liberality of the helpings that, with all my hunger, I could not eat more than a third of the food. But my table companion—a Catalan gentleman—ate his way steadily through the menu as if it was an everyday affair, as indeed it was. The *maitre d'hôtel* asked me in pained surprise if the food was not agreeable, and was astonished at my explanation.

The Andorran cookery is, on the whole, exceedingly good. At Escaldas you may find as good a meal as you

would get in Paris. The cottage cookery is excellent. A chicken is a frequent feature of a meal. The standard dish—the "roast beef"—of Andorra is *rostes al mel.*

AN OLD WOMAN OF ANDORRA

This consists of the ham of the country cut into slices, dipped into vinegar, and spread with honey before frying. The result is certainly satisfying. Honey is freely used in Andorran cookery; sometimes spices are used

a little too freely for the English palate. But no man need pass through Andorra and be hungry.

The women age quickly in Andorra. You will see the woman of twenty-five, well-built and clear-complexioned, hardly looking her years. Beside her you will see her mother, perhaps not more than fifty, but with wrinkled face and sunken eyes that in England would tell a tale of seventy years. They work too hard, the women of Andorra. They need a touch of the spirit animating the " modern " woman—only a touch, not a saturation. They are in little more than a mediæval state, where a man's woman was his possession, graded slightly higher than his cattle and pigs. They have no notion of the position of women in other countries. The idea of " sex equality " is beyond their comprehension. The Andorran woman of the isolated valleys is even more primitive than her man.

I like the children of Andorra. It is difficult not to like the children of any race ; kittens are always more attractive than cats. The boys and girls of Andorra are as healthy and clean-limbed as you are likely to find anywhere. They are athletes from the time they walk. They are mountaineers by the time they go to school. The heights have no terrors for them. The precipitous path is a joyous adventure, the steep climb a great romp. They must make their own pleasures. There are no sweet-shops in Andorra. Pennies on Saturdays are unknown. There is hardly a ball to play with in the whole country. Toys are almost unheard of, so the Andorran child plays the universal game of make-believe. I have seen them play at schools—a very popular

game this, since schools are a modern novelty. They play at dancing, aping the manners of their elders with an incongruous charm. I saw them playing at General Councils, with a fresh-cheeked *Syndic* in the chair ; the speeches were refreshingly short. They play at funerals ; they play at weddings. But most of their play is work. They help in the fields at the sowing and the harvest ; they help in the woods in the accumulation of the winter's stock of fuel. They go to school when work and weather permit. Some of the valleys are utterly impassable for months in the year ; then the Andorran child must spend many weeks continuously under its own roof.

I like the men of Andorra. They are clean—mentally as well as physically. I saw no deformed in Andorra, and I could not discover any serious vices. Drunkenness is almost unknown, although everyone drinks freely of the local wines. Like all southern races, the Andorrans have a *flair* for gambling. Fortunately, work is so hard and money so scarce that the trait is repressed ; but I found that Andorran visitors to Seo de Urgel frequently invested in the State lotteries which are announced there in every shop-window. Fortunately, no Andorran has ever yet won a big money prize, otherwise the tendency might flourish.

The Andorran knows his mountains and valleys better than the London taxi-driver knows his Piccadilly. But his geography is almost confined to his own country and the ways out of it. Seo de Urgel, l'Hospitalet, and Porte are the only " foreign " places he knows. Hundreds of Andorrans have never been without their own

land. There is an Andorran saying which indicates that a man has travelled a great deal, "*Ha sequit la Seca, la Meca, y la Vall d'Andorra*"—that he has been to *la Seca*, *la Meca*, and the Andorran valley. Seca and Meca are two watch-towers, one near St. Julian de Loria and one near Ordino. The phrase thus indicates that a man has seen the whole of Andorra.

Only a small proportion of the men of Andorra can read or write. In Encamp I took a photograph of a willing group of men gathered to watch a travelling tinker. I suggested that I should send them copies of the photograph—a suggestion which met with unanimous approval. Handing my notebook and pencil to the nearest man, I asked him to write down his name and address. Alas, his eyesight was failing, he said, and passed on the task to his neighbour. But the latter claimed an injured hand, which left him unable to write. Only with the fourth man did I find someone who could laboriously transcribe his own name.

But although literature and geography may be neglected, history and mathematics are strong subjects in Andorra. The average Andorran knows a great deal more than does the average Englishman of the history of his own land. He has the Constitution at his fingertips. He knows exactly what are his rights and privileges, and the lines over which he may not step. He is very proud of his little country which has survived so many critical times; and he is always ready to do anything for the good of his country. By accident or design, the Andorran is imbued with the spirit which ought to animate the members of any State. Not that his senti-

ment is perfect. I would not care to claim that he thinks of the State first and himself second; but while he certainly thinks of himself, he considers his community at the same time. Even this is a great advance on the idea prevailing in more " civilized " States.

When I referred to mathematics in Andorra, I was not thinking of the binomial theorem or logarithms—I doubt if anyone in Andorra has ever heard of them. But try to cheat any Catalan in a financial deal and you will find that he is not so simple as he may seem. He is well versed in the intricacies of Franco-Spanish rates of exchange; he has a clear head for monetary calculation. He knows how to drive a bargain; he is careful and painstaking. Although the comparison of the Catalan to the Scotsman is usually made on irresponsible grounds, the two races are of a very similar type.

Although elementary education has come to Andorra, many winter winds will roar down the valleys before the fog of superstition is dispersed. There is a fairy-story associated with every physical feature, and the little people—the *fadas*—are not altogether unreal. No Andorran woman will air her linen in any spot but that which has been reserved for the village by the fairies; then the *fadas* will guard the linen, and it will never be stolen or blown away. And I am not so sure that the Andorran does not believe in evil spirits as well. The muleteer mutters a prayer, true, as he passes along the gorge or the precipitous path, but I would not like to guarantee that his prayer is always addressed to the Deity.

They are a simple-minded people, these Andorrans.

Fairies and saints are no mythical figures to them. Every village has its saint, whose fête is solemnized every year; but the word " solemnized " hardly applies. True, there is a Mass, but the most important events are a feast and a dance, in which everyone from miles around takes part. A pilgrimage is a pleasant day's outing, to be indulged in on the feeblest pretext.

Along the gorges of Saint Antony, between Andorra-la-Viella and Massana, is the Rock of the Bear. The rock is reputed to resemble a bear in shape, although the resemblance is not obvious to the uninitiated. The local legend says that once on this spot a she-bear lost her cub and called for it day and night. The devotion was so pleasing to the spirits of the valley that she did not die, but was turned into stone; and still she stands calling her cub home. You will meet men—a privileged few—who have heard her calling; and you will meet a great many men who will not pass that way in the dark.

The primitive mind of the Andorran is also illustrated by his sense of humour. (Many writers, by the way, declare or assume that he has none; this is utterly untrue.) He delights in the elementary humour of destruction; the crude, practical joke is no unknown thing, and his idea of conscious humour is childlike. I met a mountaineer on a rough path; we stopped to chat, and he suggested that we should sit down. " Let us find some soft stones to sit on," he said, and laughed heartily at his own joke. I heard the quip more than once in Andorra. Strangely enough, General Younghusband, in one of his fascinating books on the Himalayas, tells how the stock joke of his troop of Gurkhas

was, " Let us find some soft stones to lie on." Simple minds think alike across the world.

And they are a big-hearted people, these Andorrans. Strangers misjudge them because of the apparent frigidity of their countenances; but warm blood runs through Andorran veins ; human sympathy flows deep. The trouble of one becomes the trouble of the village ; a man " out of luck " has the assistance of his village before he seeks it ; when the head of the house is ill he may depend on his neighbours to befriend his family.

There are rich and poor in Andorra, but there are no destitute and no beggars. The variations between rich and poor are not strongly marked. The richest man in Andorra would cut a very poor figure in an English country town. The poor man is he who has no land ; he must work for others ; and as the gains are small his wages are smaller. But no one starves in Andorra. There are some who by reason of age or infirmity cannot work and have no family to support them ; these the village makes its special charge. Every morning the *consul* sees to it that sufficient food is sent to them—not as a charity, but as a right. (This, by the way, is no modern poor-law, but a thousand-year-old custom.) And an Andorran never forfeits his birthrights. He may leave his country, and may roam over foreign lands. He usually makes good ; but if misfortune or affliction should befall him he may always return to Andorra, and his own people will sustain him for the rest of his days.

It is very easy to misjudge the Andorrans. First impressions are rarely accurate. If you merely glance at

the Andorran visage, you may class him as unattractive. If you speak no word of his language, you might call him taciturn. If you do not see him in his home life, you would call him cold. If you do not take the trouble to see into his mind, you might call him stupid. If you look merely at the surface, you might say that he was hard, callous, and churlish.

And you would be absolutely wrong.

CHAPTER IV

THE WAYS INTO ANDORRA

THERE are very few practicable routes by which Andorra may be reached. The easiest—and the only one whereby the capital may be gained by road—is by Seo de Urgel, on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees. Urgel is fifty kilometres from the nearest railway station, but is connected by a local autobus service. To get to Seo de Urgel you must travel from Paris to Perpignan, via Toulouse. At Perpignan you change to the electric railway which runs to Villefranche, at the foot of Canigou. Here a further change is necessary, for the line now takes the form of an electric tramway, which winds along the southern edge of the Cerdagne to reach its terminus at Bourg Madame. This village is actually on the Spanish frontier. An antiquated cab will carry you over the international bridge into Puigcerda, only two kilometres distant, and it is at Puigcerda that you will find the autobus for Seo de Urgel. The road follows closely the windings of the Segre, in and out among the hills which form the lower slopes of the Sierra del Cadi. From Urgel runs a regular autobus service to Andorra-la-Viella, and even to Encamp. The bus services, be it noted, operate regularly during the summer months only; in the winter all the routes are normally snowed up, and for lengthy periods are impassable for wheeled traffic.

This is the easiest way, and the quickest. Leaving

London at 9 a.m., you may reach Perpignan at 8 a.m. the following day; continue at once to Bourg Madame, arriving there by midday. As you will already have spent one night in the train, it might be as well to spend the second night at Bourg Madame, where there is an excellent little hotel. Even then, you will reach the capital of Andorra in the afternoon of the third day.

This is the easiest way; but the easiest way is seldom the most interesting, and this is no exception. The valley of the Segre can offer no great attractions, particularly when compared with the beauties of the northern approaches. If your youth has long been left behind, or if your physical strength is not great, then this is the obvious way for you to take. But if you are reasonably strong and healthy, and accustomed to long tramps across country, then you should assuredly enter Andorra from the French side. Since a visit to Seo de Urgel is an almost essential sequel to a journey to Andorra you may, if you wish, use the valley of the Segre as your alternative route home.

There is only one road in Andorra besides the one which passes from Seo de Urgel to Encamp by way of the capital. The second road crosses the north-eastern boundary. Leaving the main route from Ax-les-Thermes to Bourg Madame at a point about six kilometres south of l'Hospitalet, the road has been constructed in a rough-and-ready fashion as far as Soldeu, the first hamlet in this corner of the republic. Thence a mule track leads to Encamp, joining up with the road to the capital. If you have a good car and a very good driver, you can reach Soldeu by road, or, if you prefer it, you may hire

a mule with its attendant muleteer; but if you are wise you will make the journey on foot.

The man who would see the Pyrenees can only do so by his own endeavours. You can reach a few interesting points on the northern side by rail; you may visit a number of show-places by car. I do not wish to disparage these just because they are show-places. Gavarnie

THE GATES OF ANDORRA

is one of them, and Gavarnie is one of the finest sights in the whole world. But to sense the spirit of these wonderful mountains, to catch the atmosphere that pervades them, you must seek out the corners which are seldom disturbed by the foot of man. You must wander along the untravelled valleys, where the only sound is the roar of the mountain torrent as it dashes itself against the huge boulders which obstruct its downward

path. You must walk across the high passes, where the mountains lose some of their majesty, but become more friendly. If you can, you must scale some of the lonely peaks, leaving the world behind you, blotted out by a film of clouds. If you will do these things, you must of necessity absorb the real atmosphere of the mountains. When the old pagan witch-doctors attributed its spirit to every mountain and stream, they were not entirely playing with mere superstition. Greater minds than theirs have recorded uncanny influences on the part of physical features. We no longer believe with the ancients in the existence of living spirits as the familiars of mountains and rivers, but is it not readily conceivable that each may have its own peculiar psychological effect? Surely every one of us has experienced such a sensation at some time or other. Even in our homes we find the same phenomena. One room depresses us, another has an atmosphere of exhilaration. There may be no logical reason, but the influence is there. Logic is of priceless value when we are dealing with things of which we know; but even in our time there are so many things which we do not know that logic may sometimes lead us astray.

If you sincerely desire to sense the pulse of the mountains, it is best to travel alone. There are, of course, many drawbacks to such a course. The unbeaten tracks of the Pyrenees are not without their minor dangers. I have never yet encountered a bear or a wolf during the summer months, but I have met snakes in plenty. Once I was bitten by a small viper when ten kilometres from the nearest house. That was one of the few occasions

when I wished that I were not alone. There are more homely but not less grave risks to face. A sprained ankle is one of the most common casualties of the Pyrenees. With a friend at hand the mishap should not prove serious ; alone, it may be a tragedy. And I do not need to speak of the loss of the joys of companionship if one travels alone. There are very many sacrifices to be made, but there is a very great deal to be gained.

Once, when preparing for a long series of tramps across lonely mountains, I thought to take a companion with me. On a sheet of paper I dotted down the qualities that ought to be included in a perfect companion for such a trip. They ran something like this :

1. He must be able to talk.
2. He must be able to keep quiet.
3. He must not quarrel with me.
4. He must not agree with me.
5. He must be as good a walker as myself.
6. He must not be a better walker than I am.
7. He should know his manners in a strange country.
8. He must speak the language of the country where we must travel.
9. He should not be afraid of a difficulty, but should take no undue risk.
10. He must have a brain and a personality.
11. He must be able to efface himself completely from my mind.

These were excellent qualities, as I set them down. Then I looked round my circle of friends to pick out the man who should satisfy my conditions. I have very many friends, and I considered them one by one; but I went on my tramp alone.

And yet, how essential it was that my prospective companion should pass every one of these tests! How else could I really get to know the country and its people, unless he were in perfect harmony with me? Yet not one could I trust to this extent. This may sound supercilious, but it is not. Consider my points. Many, many of my friends could talk long and brilliantly on a range of subjects; their conversation was and is a delight to me. But a much smaller number could keep silent when the occasion demanded. The art of quiet appreciation is greater than the art of the conversationalist. I do not imply, of course, that a friend would talk continuously—of course he would not. But would his moments of quietness coincide with mine? Would the same influence affect him and me alike?

Then his opinions must not differ violently from mine. I love a good argument as well as anyone, but in the heat of a debate one may walk for miles without even seeing the scenery, much less feeling the things which one does not see. Yet he must not hold the same opinions as I do, or otherwise his conversation is bound to bore me.

And he must not surpass me in physical endurance. I might spoil his day if I were tired when he wished to press on, and he would certainly spoil mine if the circumstances were reversed.

It was a matter of deep regret to me that I had to put down the seventh condition. Alas, how many Englishmen who travel abroad could satisfy it? How often does not one feel ashamed! The Englishman at home is one of the best-mannered people in the world, but he has a

deservedly bad reputation abroad. A particularly objectionable trait is his habit of treating the inhabitants of a foreign country as an inferior race—looking down on them with a genial disdain. I would ask no questions when taking anyone to Paris, for in a cosmopolitan city bad manners pass unnoticed. But to get to know a simple, primitive people needs a tact which the English tourist ought to possess, but does not exhibit. This very simple and elementary factor ruled out very many of my friends. It is not a mere modern failing. Froissart complained that " Englishmen are so proud that they set no store by any nation but their own," while even Defoe was moved to say that his countrymen " were the most churlish people alive to foreigners, so that all men think an Englishman the devil."

Under the same heading comes the language question. If my companion cannot join in my conversation with the people of the country, then a link in the chain is broken. Not only will he feel awkward, out of place, and probably bored, but I shall be disappointed in my main endeavour. For, since my friend must necessarily remain a stranger in the land, I, too, cannot hope to be admitted to its intimacies.

The next condition, though very essential to travellers in a wild country, raised no difficulties, for many of my friendships were made under conditions which, it is to be hoped, will not recur for very many generations. It will be a catastrophe if by that time the world has not learned to order its affairs along peaceful paths.

Assuredly my friend must have a brain and a personality, otherwise he must become insipid after many days

of close and solitary companionship. Yet how this clashes with the final condition—the most necessary of all! How few people possess the gift of self-effacement! It is rare among women, and almost unknown among men; but unless my mind be absolutely clear of every other influence, how can it hope to receive the real and deepest impressions of the journey?

Not for one moment do I pretend to possess all these qualifications myself. When I wrote them down I was selfishly considering my own happiness.

The question of loneliness did not affect the circumstances at all. A healthy man ought never to be lonely in the mountains. I hate to be alone in cities—cold, friendless places as they are. But among the mountains all is different. Even if you pine for human friendship, every soul you meet in the mountains is willing to be your friend. In the city people pass by you in their thousands and never throw a look or a word. On the mountain paths you may meet but two or three people in a day's march, but you will sit down and chat with these, and will part with a handshake and a pleasant memory.

So if it is your purpose to see and feel things which may not always be seen and felt, then you will take a chance and voyage alone; but if you approach the mountains in holiday mood, then take your friends with you. Take one, two, three, or more. Make up a jolly little party, the only qualifications being physical fitness, good spirits, and a sense of comradeship. You may perhaps fail to catch the spirit of the mountains, but you must assuredly capture happiness—which is worth seeking. So gather your friends, put your packs on your

SOLDEU

backs, and you shall reach Andorra. Let me describe the way. Later we will talk of the equipment you should take.

I have said that you may journey to Soldeu by car, but you must return by the way you came. This route, however, is the easiest entry into Andorra from the north. It is the only one which is perfectly safe in all weathers—except in winter, of course, when it is buried deep in snow. Of the other passes into Andorra, several are perfectly safe and easy in good weather, but may be dangerous if it be misty or cloudy. But the road from l'Hospitalet over the shoulder of the Embalire will never let you down.

From a point on the northern slope of the pass of Puymorens a little road winds round the mountains towards the source of the Ariège. On the French side the road is well bridged and some attempt is made to keep it in repair, for I saw a group of workmen removing the traces of a small local landslide. After about six kilometres the road reaches a bridge over the Ariège. This is the boundary of Andorra.

The scene is a remarkable one. To the left of the bridge is a small cirque of mountains. Every peak is well over 8,000 feet, but they give no impression of height, since you already stand at about 6,000 feet. At the foot of Font Nègre—where little drifts of snow usually remain throughout the summer—nestles a small lake, or rather a large pond. A hundred yards above it you may trace the source of the Ariège.

The valley is a wide one, and is liberally strewn with great boulders—glacial remains. On the left bank of the

stream stretches the Soulane, a long, grass-covered ridge. In front of you are the grassy slopes of the Embalire. The road is plainly discernible as it zigzags its way up the mountain-side. If you are on foot, it is not at all necessary to follow the windings of the road—you have but to scramble direct to the pass above you. The climb is not too steep, but the grass may be slippery—it is certainly better than the gradual ascent by the road, which is sure but exceedingly monotonous.

When at last you reach the pass of the Embalire, you stand at one of the finest view-points in the whole range. You will stand still instinctively, rooted to the spot—although, actually, the best views are obtained after you have descended a hundred feet or so.

Straight in front of you, from ten to twenty miles ahead, you will see a cluster of the wildest and highest peaks of the Pyrenees. Closely packed as they are, each one seems to be straining itself to outvie its neighbour. Few of them claim less than 9,000 feet—some are considerably higher. You will gaze ahead for many long moments.

But the view to the left is even more thrilling. You must descend a little and bear to your left to see it at its best. Then the Cirque dels Pessons will reveal itself—a vast semicircle of grey mountains, with a diameter of three or four miles. I would place the Cirque dels Pessons second only to that of Gavarnie ; and it is not spoiled by the presence of trippers, and never will be.

I have a happy recollection of the Porte d'Embalire, for it was there that I met my first Andorran. After my eyes had feasted on the grandeur about me, I turned towards

the grassy slopes of the Soulane, where hundreds of horses roamed at will, a tin bell round the neck being the only form of restriction. As I watched them, I saw a figure making its way towards me. I must admit that a wave of excitement engulfed me. I had read of these Andorrans—this taciturn race of smugglers, who hated the intrusion of strangers—and I could not be certain of my reception. I felt in my pocket to be certain that I was prepared for any emergency. The figure revealed itself as that of the *equassé*, the man who cast a cursory glance at the horses from time to time. Not that he could do anything if one of the horses made a false step—and the skeletons I found proved that this was more than possible.

He walked quickly towards me, his dog by his side. I noticed the rope slung around his body—a useful accessory in these precipitous parts. He bade me good day, and the conversation opened accordingly. I was delighted to find that my crude Catalan would pass. So far from being taciturn, he was only too glad of an opportunity to talk. He explained that he often passed days on the mountains without meeting a fellow-creature. He displayed the liveliest interest in my clothes and equipment, and plied me with such questions as one would expect from a child. An English cigarette was a delight to touch and a wonder to smoke—he had never seen a machine-made cigarette before.

The time was a little after noon, so we sat down and ate together—a cordial sign of friendship among men. It appeared that I was the first Englishman he had ever seen. His knowledge of England was extraordinarily

slight. By some strange chance, England was confused in his mind with Russia. I had to disillusion him on many points. His questions were numerous and of childlike simplicity. How had I come from England ? I explained. Ah, what was a boat, exactly ? He had often heard men speak of boats, but had never seen one. (It must be remembered that none of the rivers of Andorra—or those for many miles around—are navigable.) I described a boat, and then a train. A motor-car he had seen, for an adventurous driver occasionally crosses the path as far as Soldeu. His knowledge of the mechanism of a car was of the vaguest. He believed that the necessary power was obtained by the driver turning the handle—that is to say, the steering-wheel. But this was not the crude guess of an unintelligent child. One must remember that he had only seen cars ascending or descending the zigzags of the pass—that is to say, when the driver was turning the steering-wheel continuously.

I would willingly have passed another hour with my inquisitive friend, but half my journey still lay before me. So I lingered no longer by the roadside—the highest road in the Pyrenees, by the way—but began the descent to Soldeu.

The road lowers itself very cautiously, but a rough mule track indicates an easy descent for a man on foot. When next the road is joined we are on a level with the Valira, the principal stream of Andorra.

A tramp of a couple of miles along a reasonably good road brings us to the first houses in Andorra. At first sight it is difficult to judge whether they are houses or barns ; on inspection they sometimes prove to be both.

The first time I passed by Bordes de Soldeu I found not a living soul in the tiny hamlet, everyone—man, woman, and child—was at work in the fields.

Another two miles and Soldeu itself is reached. Here, so it seems, the last main link with Europe snaps, for the little road which has guided us comes to an end. Henceforward we must take to the mule-track—the main thoroughfare of the republic. But the traveller need have no fear of missing his path. In all parts of the Pyrenees are tracks which disappear with vexing frequency and are only found again after arduous search. There are false tracks which look so promising, but which lead their pursuers into impossible situations; but the path from Soldeu to Encamp is marked with the footprints of a hundred generations. In some places it has been literally hacked out of the mountain-side. Sometimes it is a pleasant path by the side of the rushing river; sometimes it climbs a little up the mountain-side, only to fall again. Tiny clusters of houses lie by its side at a distance of every mile or so, and Canillo is reached after less than two hours' easy marching. Canillo is the first Andorran village that lies on this route, for Soldeu is but a hamlet. Still another hour and a half, and Encamp appears in its wide and pleasant valley. By this time the journey is nearly over; for Encamp is the terminus of the road which passes to the capital and to Seo de Urgel, and if you are tired you may wait here for the autobus on its nightly journey.

Having come so far on foot, however, it is a pity to spoil your record by imploring the aid of wheels, and Escaldas is little more than an hour's walk ahead. And

LA MOSQUERA, ENCAMP

here is a very important point to be noted by everyone who would visit Andorra—you should stay at Escaldas. The Andorran does not exactly welcome visitors; he will give them accommodation, but would rather not. And the accommodation at the Andorran inn—while not quite as bad as it has been painted—is not at all attractive; but this standard does not apply to Escaldas. In this hamlet are some of the mineral springs so common on the French side of the mountains, and here a doctor has established a small thermal station which serves almost the whole of Spanish Catalonia. In consequence, there are two or three little hotels in Escaldas which are quite clean and reasonably comfortable. I usually stay at the Hôtel Pla, but I am quite prepared to believe that the others are equally good. Escaldas is an excellent centre from which to view the republic, for the capital is only forty minutes' walk away.

When I asked a native what illnesses the Escaldas springs were likely to cure, I got the reply, "Well, what have you got?" Unfortunately, I did not know the Catalan for housemaid's knee, or I would have mentioned it. I was, however, able to mention that I had an earache. My informant was immediately enthusiastic. He was confident that the springs would cure my earache. Whether I would have to drink of the waters or bathe in them he was not at all certain. I have always suspected some degree of auto-suggestion or moral effect in spa cures. A chemist may make up a potion which is chemically equivalent to a Carlsbad water, but in most cases it would not have the same effect on a patient—and so the inference appears obvious. A medical friend

once told me that only seven drugs had any real effect on bodily ills. He mentioned their names—the only one I recognized was quinine. All the rest of the " doctor's medicines," or quack remedies, simply worked on the patient's confidence. I hope that I do no injustice to watering-places. I have always regarded them suspiciously—primarily because most of them are so well provided with music, amusements, casinos, and such-like diversions, whose connection with chronic invalidism is difficult to discover.

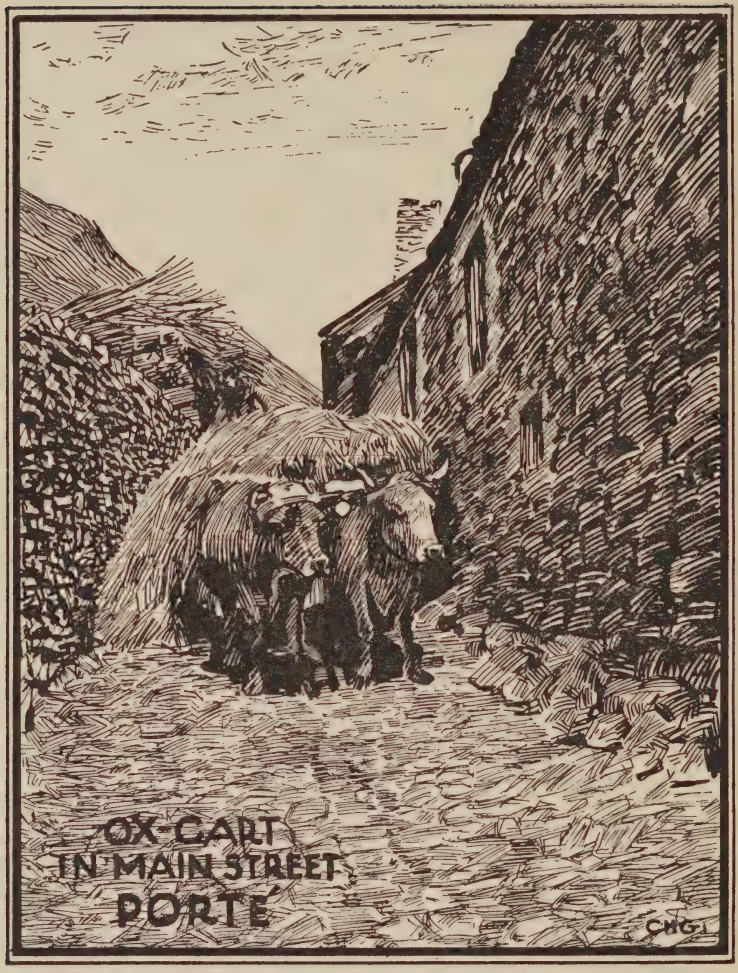
Whatever may be the claims of Escaldas as a medical rendezvous, it is certainly an excellent centre for the exploration of Andorra. All the six villages are within three or four hours' walk. To all who chance to visit Andorra my advice is that they should make their headquarters in Escaldas.

If, then, you have decided to enter Andorra from the French side, here is your best itinerary. (If you are well acquainted with the guiles of Pyrenean tracks, you may take one of the routes which I mention later.) You take the train to Bourg Madame, via Perpignan, as previously described. Then you can travel by autobus to Porté, at the foot of the Puymorens. Better still, you can walk, for it is but half a day's march. Unless you are in perfect physical condition, you might do worse than stay a few days at Porté and do some practice climbing and walking among the Carlitte group of mountains. Here are to be found a cluster of lakes—among the largest in the Pyrenees. You will never begrudge the time you spend in this neighbourhood. If you are a fisherman, you will find here your paradise.

When you come to make the journey into Andorra, you should start at as early an hour as is practicable. First you clamber up to the Col de Puymorens—quite an easy matter. A couple of miles along the main road, and you reach a turning to the left—plainly marked by a signpost—which will conduct you to the sources of the Ariège, the boundary of Andorra. Then you follow the route as already described—over the Porte d'Embalire, through Soldeu, Canillo, and Encamp to Escaldas. The complete journey will take you about twelve hours.

There is an alternative to the first part of the journey —an alternative which most travellers favour. You may take the train to Ax-les-Thermes, via Toulouse, and thence take the autobus or walk to the village of l'Hospitalet, on the northern side of the Puymorens Pass. Or, if you prefer it, you may journey via Bourg Madame (a longer journey, but far more interesting) and continue your march through Porté over the pass to l'Hospitalet. If you do not wish to climb the pass, buy a couple of candles at Porta—the village south of Porté—and walk through the railway tunnel. No lines are yet laid, so you need fear no catastrophe—the short cut is commonly used by the locals. From l'Hospitalet there is a track which leads direct to the Embalire road at the source of the Ariège. You must cross over, just south of the village, to the left bank of the river, and you will find your path following alongside the stream until it joins the road at the frontier bridge. You cannot possibly miss your way.

The advantage of starting from l'Hospitalet is that you do not have to start your journey by climbing over


OX-CART
IN MAIN STREET
PORTÉ
CHG

the Puymorens Pass. This is certainly a decided gain. The advantage of starting from Porté is that you are able to stay at the inn of Madame Michet. No one can claim to know the Pyrenees who does not know the inn of Madame Michet. To stay there is far more than compensation for an additional climb.

Madame Michet is a personality. Mr. Hilaire Belloc once wrote about her inn in a book. It deserves all that he says, and more. You do not know what the word hospitality really means until you have stayed at the Hôtel Michet. That is its title, but it is quite unlike all other hotels you have ever seen. The pigs and cows live on the ground-floor. The humans eat on the first floor, and sleep on the second. From the stable you mount a staircase which is almost a ladder, and which deposits you in the huge kitchen. You must pass along the kitchen to another staircase, and then you will find your bedroom. Everywhere is wonderfully clean.

And the food! If you eat one-half of what is set before you, it will be well to avoid strenuous exercise for the rest of the day. I am not an epicure, but I have never tasted anything sweeter than the trout of Madame Michet. You will dine *en famille*. The servants may sit beside you, and there are certain to be some children. You will gain the reputation of being amiable if you make a few appropriate remarks to them; if you can bring yourself to nurse a baby for a few minutes, you may even be afforded the privilege of Madame's conversation.

Madame herself will be at the head of the table, wearing a lambskin which her grandmother probably wore.

Madame is served first, and any extra dainties go to her. Madame rules the house—and the village. When the Government makes a new law, the village stands by to see what Madame Michet will do; and Madame does not always agree with the Government. Politicians in Paris may issue absurd instructions about summer-time, but Madame Michet will not have her clocks telling untruths. When she tells you that dinner will be at eight o'clock, she means eight o'clock, and the hands of your watch will point to nine before the soup is served.

The conversation is varied and always of interest. Should you be a literary critic, however, let me give you a hint that may save you from disaster. Talk of poets and writers as you will, and criticize them soundly; criticize Shakespeare, Goethe, and Dante; show them up as mere amateurs; but do not say a word against Mr. Hilaire Belloc, otherwise there will be a storm, and you will be in the centre of it.

One other of the main tracks into Andorra also starts from l'Hospitalet—the path which climbs over the Porte de Soldeu. You must cross, as before, to the left bank of the Ariège at a point a few yards south of the village. Follow the course of the stream—towards its source—for about four miles, until it reaches the point where it is joined by the brook St. Joseph. Here you turn to the right, and follow the course of the little stream. You cannot possibly mistake your turning, for you will find a line of telegraph posts alongside your new path. These telegraph posts will guide you to Soldeu, for the path is never very far away. Although a stiffer climb than the Porte d'Embalire, the Porte de Soldeu is not by

any means difficult. It certainly cuts off the miles of marching to the source of the Ariège. On the other hand, much of the scenic variety of the longer path is lost—although the mountains are wild and picturesque, the Porte de Soldeu is more confined.

The local people will insistently warn you against using the Porte de Soldeu in bad weather. I used to think that their warnings were rather exaggerated, but I must admit that some nasty falls await you should you miss your path—and a Pyrenean mist is a treacherous cloak. If you start from l'Hospitalet, however, there is no need to decide on your route until you reach the junction of the Ariège and the St. Joseph. Then, if the sky be clear, you may take your path to the right; but if the weather be doubtful you may continue by the banks of the Ariège and join the road which climbs the Embalire. You should save at least an hour by taking the shorter route, which leads you right into Soldeu itself. Thence you will continue your journey towards Canillo, as has been previously described.

Although you will naturally try to make Escaldas within the day, if you should tire you may obtain accommodation at either Soldeu, Canillo, or Encamp. It is never worth trying to do too much in the Pyrenees; you will regret it the next day. The total distance from Porté or l'Hospitalet to Escaldas, however, cannot be a yard short of twenty miles, and there is a good deal of climbing which turns one mile into six. But if you are in sound physical condition, and particularly if you have had a few days' practice on Pyrenean tracks, you should be able to do the march without distress.

There are at least two other tracks into Andorra which are safe for the ordinary voyager. The first starts from Porta (about two miles south of Porté) and crosses the pass known as the Porteille Blanche d'Andorre at about 8,000 feet. This is as lonely a track as you will find in the Pyrenees. It is most improbable that you will meet a fellow-human from the time you leave Porta until you finish your day's march at Escaldas, to which hamlet the track runs direct. In good weather you should have no difficulty in finding your way, although on the heights there is a small stretch where you are liable to error. Just below Porta you will find a bridge over the Carol River. You must cross this, and you will see your path bearing slightly to the left as it mounts the hill-side. On the French side it is most clearly marked. All you have to do is to follow the course of the brook Campeardos almost to its source. Then, a little to the left, you will see your first pass—the Porteille Blanche. You must descend a little into the Vall de la Llosa and turn left, counting three streams to your right. The streams themselves may be dried up, but their courses will be obvious. After a mile along the valley you will find your third stream, and will climb up its course to the pass of Valcivera. Thence the path is very clearly marked along the Civera Valley to Escaldas. These directions may seem a little complicated, but your passes are so obvious and the path is generally marked, so that you may expect to reach Escaldas in about nine hours.

The second path leads from Les Cabannes over the Peyregrils Pass, and thence to the capital—a very inter-

esting journey directly north to south. You should spend the night at Les Cabannes, a village lying on the railway from Foix to Ax-les-Thermes. The first part of the march consists of the tracing of the River Aston to its source. About five miles below the hamlet of Aston the path divides; the track to the left follows the main river and makes a circuitous route before reaching the valley of the Valira, near Soldeu. This track should be avoided. Take the path to the right, which directs due south by the course of another stream. Very soon you are out of the forest which has hitherto encompassed you, and almost immediately afterwards you cross to the right bank of the stream. About two miles below this the path divides once again, and once again you must bear to the right. Still following a watercourse, after a further four miles over a grassy slope, you reach a tiny lake—l'Étang de Souland, and then the pass lies straight before you. Climbing up the grassy hill in a direction south by west, you will cross over the pass of Peyregrils and descend into the valley of the Rialb, which lies straight before you. Then the worst part of your journey is over. Following the Rialb Valley, you will arrive within an hour at Serat, a tiny Andorran hamlet. Thence the mule-path to Ordino and the capital is plainly marked and perfectly easy.

I would not recommend anyone to attempt the entry into Andorra by the Porteille Blanche or the Peyregrils Pass unless he is in hard physical condition and has had some previous experience of Pyrenean tramping. It is very advisable to consult the local people as to whether the weather favours the trip. Some of the old hands are

wonderful weather prophets, and though they nearly always err on the side of caution, it is as well to take their advice. In clear weather you can hardly fail to force the entry; but if it is your first experience of the Pyrenees you would be well advised to make your initial entry into Andorra by the road over the Embalire.

I have mentioned that it is an excellent thing to continue your journey by passing out into Seo de Urgel on the Spanish side, thence returning to France by another track or by autobus to Puigcerda. I have not mentioned the obvious alternative—entering Andorra from Seo de Urgel and passing out over the northern border. But entering Andorra from the north and leaving it by the north are two very different things. In the journey from France, you can always break the back of the march before midday—which is almost essential. Even if you should tire after this, there are villages on most of the routes where you can find accommodation of a kind. But if you leave, say, Escaldas for l'Hospitalet, you have a good half-day's march before the real climbing begins; and once you have left Soldeu you must perforce finish the journey, unless you are prepared to spend the night in the open. You could, of course, stay the night at Soldeu, but you might not get that uninterrupted rest that the morrow would demand. The difficult part of a trans-Pyrenean journey is almost invariably on the French side, for the Spanish valleys have a long and gentle slope, while the French are short and steep. The obvious course is to start from the French side and get the worst part of the journey over before the heat of the day.

There are one or two other paths into Andorra which I have not mentioned because (1) they are very little used, (2) they do not lead from useful points, (3) they are not safe without a guide except to practised Pyrenean walkers, (4) I have no personal experience of them. The only one of any importance is that which leads from the village of Siguer, near Tarascon, to the pass of Peyregrils. This track, I have been told, is fairly easy to follow, and covers a very interesting course.

Such are the ways into Andorra, trailing through some of the wildest parts of the Pyrenean ranges. The chief danger is that of intense fatigue; but though the journey may be hard, the reward is proportionately great. You will pass from civilization into a freer and more natural state.

At the end of this book I will add a few notes and practical hints, together with itineraries, which may be of use to anyone who wishes to make a journey to Andorra.

CHAPTER V

SEO DE URGEL

Seo de Urgel ("The See of Urgel") is well named. Take away the Cathedral with its attendant offices, and Urgel would be an inconspicuous village now that its value as a frontier fort has vanished. Priests must form a large proportion of the population of Seo de Urgel. It seemed that every other man I met was a priest, and many of the others were young men training to be priests. It must be difficult to find work for all the priests to do. I saw a funeral one day; it was a very humble funeral. The coffin was wheeled along on a crude bier; it was attended by an old man and a girl—and by nine priests, not including half a dozen acolytes. And if every other man seems to be a priest, then every other house seems to be a church. I asked one day for the post office, and was directed to the top of the street. Arrived there, I saw a plain stone building whose exterior was freely decorated with telephone wires. Naturally I walked inside—right into the middle of a service. A courteous priest told me that the post office was next door, so I entered the adjoining building, only to find myself in another church! The post office I found in an inconspicuous house on the other side.

The Bishop is all-powerful in Seo de Urgel. The Government at Madrid may make laws, but if the Bishop did not approve them—well, no one else was likely to

bother his head about them. The Bishop's Palace and the Cathedral are the centres of the city in every conceivable respect. The only other building of note is the Seminary, which is under the Bishop's direct jurisdiction.

I stepped off the autobus in the square at Urgel, and was greeted by the happiest and cheekiest page-boy that it has ever been my pleasure to meet. He took hold of my pack and fixed it on his own back, nearly strangling himself in the process. He informed me that of course I wished to go to the "Gran" Hôtel Mundial. I did not, as a matter of fact; I had intended to go to a humble inn. But his shining face was too strong an invitation to be resisted, so to the "Gran" Hôtel Mundial I went. (I may say, in parenthesis, that I did not regret it; I have had worse accommodation in London or Paris, and I have nowhere had better food.) The page was a constant delight. His duties at the hotel were merely nominal, so that he was free—and anxious—to devote his whole, considerable energies to me. After I had had a preliminary walk round the town, I sat down in one of the wicker chairs outside the hotel. He joined me on his own invitation. It appeared that he had just been studying my form of identification and had discovered that I was English—and therefore a curiosity. At once he volunteered the remark that England was the greatest maritime nation in the world. This observation tickled my native pride, coming as it did from a representative of a nation which had once been our greatest rival. He began asking me questions about England, and particularly about boats. None of the people in these parts

have ever seen a ship, and their curiosity is unbounded. Suddenly, in the midst of a sentence, he put his fingers to his lips and emitted an ear-splitting whistle—which surely proves that boys will be boys, even when they are Spanish. The whistle, I found, was merely a signal to an urchin of the errand-boy type who was passing on the other side of the street. He crossed over, and my friend informally introduced me to him, quite forgetting to introduce him to me. It was apparent that my friend had called his crony in order to let him gaze on his first Englishman. The urchin gazed at me with awe ; it was some moments before he could speak. When he did again find his tongue, he made the observation that England was the greatest maritime nation in the world. He had a basket of goods to deliver, but was apparently in no hurry. (Procrastination appears to be a disease peculiar to errand-boys.) Setting down his basket, he began to ask me questions about boats. The next time I go to Catalonia I must take with me some kind of naval encyclopædia ; then I may be able to reply to all the questions. Not that I did not reply to them, of course. I did, but an Admiralty expert might have been astounded at some of the information I gave.

A few minutes later another young man arrived, leading a mule. My young friend promptly commanded him to look upon me, as I was an Englishman. The new arrival was more sophisticated. He had seen an Englishman before, he said. He also volunteered the information that England was the greatest maritime nation in the world. I strongly suspect that the boys are taught something of the kind at school.

The mule gazed at me suspiciously while his guardian asked me questions about boats. I am not very fond of mules. I have never forgiven an army mule for deliberately treading on me—and I was standing up at the time. So I was not taken unawares when this particular specimen made a vicious grab at my left ear. It is quite true that my ears project somewhat more than the normal, but it was quite unnecessary to call attention to this in a public place. Possibly the mule was jealous. His guardian made no attempt to reprove him. I suppose it was necessary for him to have his little joke.

I made firm friends of the trio (not including the mule) and relieved myself of an incubus at the same time. As it happened, only two or three days previously I had run out of chocolate. I may claim to be something of a connoisseur in chocolate. I use little else for marching purposes, and always take as much English chocolate as I can carry. But three days' journey over the mountains had exhausted my stock, and I had small hopes of replenishing it as I drifted into a tiny Catalan village. But I found there a shop which seemed to sell everything. Did they sell chocolate? Yes, certainly. The buxom proprietress produced a mass of anæmic "soft centres." Ah, no, what I wanted was a slab of plain chocolate. Certainly, the *señor* should have it! She had some excellent chocolate. A one-pound slab was produced, much to my surprise. To all appearance the packet was exactly equivalent to the French unsweetened chocolate, which is excellent for marching purposes. Quite happy, I walked off with my prize. At noon I sat down to enjoy my lunch. I took off the paper cover.

True, the chocolate did not look particularly inviting; but the taste's the thing. Then I inserted a fairly substantial portion into my mouth. Fortunately, there was no other human being within several miles in every direction, so that I was able to say aloud exactly what I thought about Spanish chocolate, its makers, and the people who sold it. This relieved my feelings somewhat, although it did not appease my appetite. I have heard of many kinds of freak concoctions, from haggis to fairy-bird-in-a-nest-of-water-melons, but I am confident that there is nothing in the world that is quite so vile of taste as Spanish chocolate.

My first impulse was to fling the offending slab over an adjacent precipice; then I decided to keep it as a curiosity. I have nephews and nieces at home who have an inordinate appetite for chocolate, and I reflected that one taste of this would cure them of the craving for ever. And so it came about that when I arrived at Seo de Urgel I had in my pack a one-pound slab of Spanish chocolate, less one small fragment.

My friend the page willingly consented to fetch the chocolate from my room. I offered a portion to each of the three boys. They accepted, and I watched their faces closely. To my amazement, they appeared to enjoy it. Could it be possible that my judgment was at fault? I continued to press chocolate upon them. I wanted to see how much it was possible to eat without being ill. So as to divert attention from my own abstinence, I smoked continuously—and any boy knows that smoke and chocolate are opposite tastes. Half of the slab disappeared fairly rapidly; then the pace slackened, and I

had to offer my portions in more tempting terms. The end came at last. I saw the eldest youth surreptitiously feeding his mule with his final piece of chocolate. I had no pity for the mule, but the brute unfortunately spat it out in disgust. Then my friend the page said that he heard his bell ringing inside the hotel; he disappeared, and I did not see him again for several hours. And at last the errand-boy declared that he was in a hurry and ought to be moving on. This was my greatest triumph of all.

I have very happy recollections of the boys of Seo de Urgel. As soon as I had cured them of the propensity of giving me gratuitous information about England being the greatest maritime nation of the world, I tried to teach them to play cricket. Games are known in Seo de Urgel which have never been heard of in the surrounding villages. There is a football team, and I even found a billiard table—a sure sign of civilization. But cricket was a new wonder. The stumps—which consisted of my coat and pack—were pitched on the Paseo de Tetuan, the principal place of the city. I carved out a bat—of a kind—in a carpenter's shop, and I had a tennis-ball in my pack. But the tuition was more difficult than I thought. My Catalan is not fluent at the best of times—I was frequently in difficulties when describing boats—but I had never fully realized its deficiencies until I attempted to describe the game of cricket. However, I handed the bat to my friend the page, and prepared to bowl myself. Although I had explained what he should do, with illustrations, he simply stood still, bat in hand. My fieldsmen—twenty

or more in number—were not yet aware of the object of the game. They cheered wildly, true, each time I hit the pack, but they yelled themselves hoarse each time I hit the batsman. Eventually I decided that I had better bat myself. My next trouble was to teach someone to bowl. Not one could manage an over-arm action ; the ball, when released, either hit the ground within a yard of the bowler's feet or else described a harmless parabola in the air. Under-arm bowling was equally unsuccessful—the ball went in every direction except that of the wicket. In desperation, I allowed them to throw the ball at the pack. This opened up the game, and I was able to make a few strokes.

Now the Paseo de Tetuan is liberally lined with trees, and some of my boundary strokes were intercepted by trunks. It occurred to my fieldsmen that the idea of the game was to hit a tree, and they applauded wildly every time I succeeded in doing so. A large crowd was collecting to see the fun, but just as I had begun to persuade the fieldsmen that they were there to stop the ball and not to applaud the batsman, the game was brought to an abrupt conclusion. The responsible agent was a dog, which seized the ball in his mouth and departed hastily. Nor could the combined efforts of my score of fieldsmen capture him again. In such manner was my missionary enterprise robbed of its fruits.

I had heard of the dogs of Urgel. I had read in some book—I cannot recall it at the moment—that the dogs of Urgel were comparable to those of Constantinople. The writer told how mangy, ill-fed dogs lay about the streets of Urgel, only moving under protest when a

tartane came down the street or when the sun sought some other spot. I am interested in dogs, but on my first day in Urgel I did not see a single specimen. I confided my misgivings to my friend the page. Were there really dogs in Urgel? Certainly. The *señor* should see them. He led me through narrow streets in search of the missing dogs. At last we stumbled across them; they were three in number, and one was an English fox-hound. I saw the dogs of Urgel many times after that—the same three followed me everywhere. I cannot say whether or no the dog who stole the tennis-ball was one of the trio, as I only caught a fleeting glimpse of him. The fox-hound may, at any rate, be exonerated.

I know of no town more fascinating than Seo de Urgel. The only place I can compare with it is Dinan, in Brittany. Each is a paradise for artists, and yet Seo de Urgel is almost unknown. I tried to get a picture of the Calle de Los Canonigos, but failed to find one. Seo de Urgel has few visitors. Occasionally it is invaded by a host of ecclesiastics bent on an episcopal conference; at such times two "Gran" Hôtels find their accommodation inadequate. The other visitors are almost entirely limited to Spanish motorists on tour, who put up for the night after casting a hasty glance at the Calle Mayor and the Cathedral.

Yet the Calle Mayor has a charm of its own. Under its massive arches you will find shops of every kind. Above the arches are the living-rooms, each window protected from the sun by a shade of red, yellow, or any other colour deemed sufficiently striking. But it was not the Calle Mayor that exercised the greatest fascina-

tion over me. The High Street of a city is seldom so interesting as its by-ways. Near the Cathedral are some of the quaintest streets in Europe. The Calle Mayor is narrow, but it is a Fifth Avenue compared to the Calle de los Canonigos. There the crude, angular arches almost meet in the middle of the street. Traffic comes to a total standstill ; only a very thin mule can pass between the buttresses. Some of the houses are quite perpendicular ; others are only approximately so. The windows of opposite houses are scarcely a yard apart. Privacy is almost impossible ; but there were compensating advantages, as I saw.

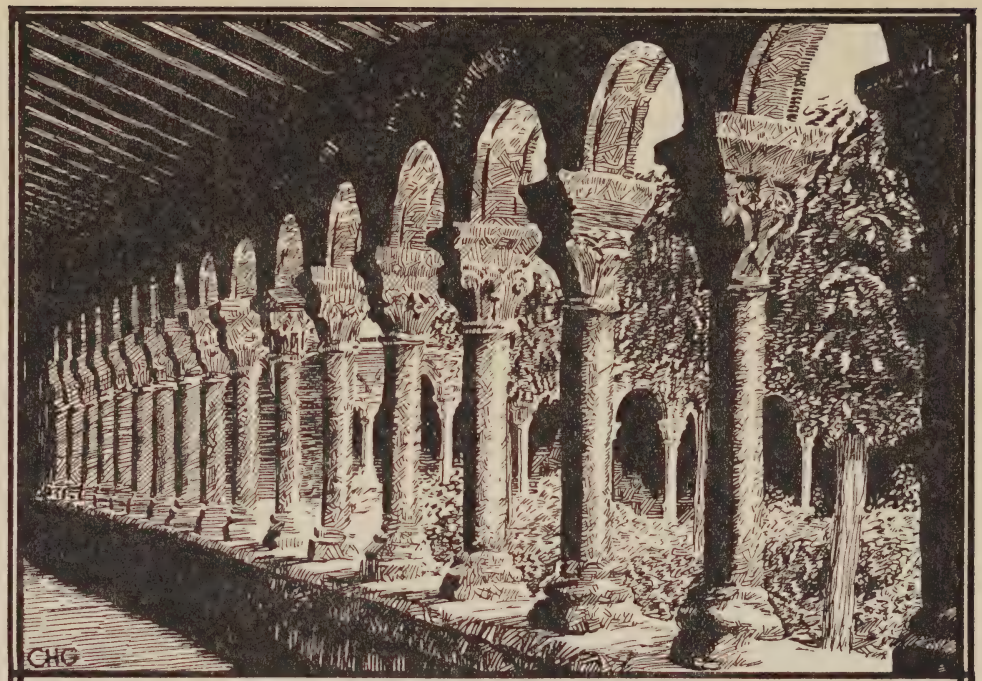
I strayed one night down the Calle de los Canonigos. Squatting on a large stone, smoking a vile cigar, I found an old man. He was willing to talk, and I found him interesting. Then I heard voices overhead ; the old man broke off to listen for a moment. To my surprise I heard a young man's voice making protestations of love. I leaned forward so that three feet of starry sky became visible. There I saw a blue shirt surmounted by a swarthy face ; two eyes were glowing and two lips moved rapidly and audibly. Presumably the *amorata* was in the room opposite. The old man winked and whispered that it was Juan and Luiza. I hinted that this was one of the advantages of a narrow street, in that one could do one's courting without leaving the house. I did mention, however, that in England we preferred to be still a little nearer, so that we could impress suitable seals on our words. Ah, but the Catalans did that, exclaimed the old man. What, without leaving the house ? Why, yes, of course. Juan should show the

CALLE DE LOS CANONIGOS
SEO DE URGEL

señor. He called up to Juan. The lovers were bashful, so I told the old man not to bother them; but he persisted. Then I saw a dark face with clean features in the opposite window; the girl leaned forward across the street. Above me a pair of brawny shoulders darkened the sky, an arm moved forward, and two pairs of lips met. In such manner is love-making made easy in the Calle de Los Canonigos.

The Cathedral of Urgel is one of the oldest in Spain. It was founded early in the fifth century, was sacked by the Moors, and afterwards rebuilt by order of Charlemagne. It has no architectural pretensions whatsoever —just a square, gaunt building. Its walls have two principal uses—to support the roof and to support innumerable telephone wires and electric cables. The principal entrance, under the tiny tower, is by a centuries-old leathern door, patched and stitched in innumerable places. A bleak vestibule leads to the Cathedral —dark, cold, and dreary. It is almost devoid of windows of any description, and has the impression of being in a large underground cavern. I should find it difficult to be moved to religious ecstasy in the Cathedral of Seo de Urgel.

But if the Cathedral is bare, the adjoining cloisters are refreshingly beautiful. The rows of pillars are plainly carved—a pleasant contrast to the befrilled stonework of many continental cathedrals. As in the case of Mont St. Michel, no two of the carvings are alike, but the simplicity of the designs gives an appearance of dignity and peace. In the midst of the cloisters are freely planted subtropical trees and plants. Despite the torrid heat



THE CLOISTERS, SEO DE URGEL

then prevailing, the atmosphere seemed to me to be soft and cool. A tired man might go to the cloisters of Seo de Urgel.

The Bishop's Palace is a commanding building in a semi-military style. The early Prince-Bishops of Urgel were warriors as well as prelates, and their residence, though rebuilt from time to time, has always been a castle as well as a palace. The doorway is crowned by the episcopal arms, and gives on to a spacious courtyard. Around this court are the official apartments, some of them being chambers of dignity and beauty. A welcome note of green relieved the grey stone; shrubs and trees were planted in every suitable spot. The library struck a note of its own; it is easy for a library to give an air of culture, but this imparted the impression of individuality as well. After I had seen his library, I was doubly sorry to find that the Bishop was away. His chaplain received me with the utmost courtesy and did not begrudge time or trouble. We discussed Andorra at great length, and I found that he had every detail of its history and constitution at his finger-tips. He was very sympathetic with the Andorrans, and remarked that the Bishop was determined to protect them against French aggression. This struck me as being something of a coincidence, for in Perpignan I found that the French officials were very sympathetic with the Andorrans and fully determined to protect them against Spanish aggression.

Yes, I was disappointed in that I did not meet the Prince-Bishop. Although his powers have been limited somewhat since the Directory was imposed, he still

wields semi-autocratic control over a wide area. The happiness of half a province depends upon his ideas. The present Bishop appeared to be popular with the common people, although I heard him abused, even by clerics. But a man of individuality—as I judge him to be—is bound to make enemies. Any Bishop of Urgel who tried to run his see along English lines would have his priests in revolution; the curse of the diocese is that the priests are so abundant that they are not properly employed.

And still they go on training more. There is a huge Seminary in Urgel, with accommodation for several hundred boys. At the time of my visit most of the students had been sent home to assist with the harvest —a sensible idea evidently borrowed from America. I had a chat with such of the boys as were in residence. Their education appeared to be running along fairly modern lines—at any rate they did not ask me questions about boats. None of them were very demonstrative, though perfectly civil, and I found it exceedingly difficult to raise a smile on their faces. True Catalans these, but I would not care to be a member of their flock.

The sun can be very hot at Seo de Urgel. I believe that I was the only person who did not take the afternoon siesta. The people at my hotel classed me as mad when I slung my pack and set off for an after-lunch tramp towards the grey slopes of the Sierra del Cadi. The English race is almost the only one which does not understand the art of wasting time. The Spanish are past-masters.

I used to sit for half an hour before dinner in one of

the wicker chairs on the pavement outside the hotel, until a trifling incident disturbed my custom. I sat one night reading a newspaper. Looking up, I saw an old woman standing before me. She was one of the lowest types of humanity: no respectable rag-and-bone merchant would have touched her clothes. She was chattering volubly. I could not understand one word in three—I do not know whether this was due to her strange dialect or her lack of teeth; but when she thrust forward her bony hand her object was apparent. I am not a friend of the professional beggar, but I had no desire to enter into an argument with this specimen. I hastily placed a ten-centimo piece in her filthy palm, and received as a reward a two minutes' flow of assorted blessings. Five minutes later another old woman arrived, slightly more disreputable than the other. This time the blessings called on me were even more emphatic. But within the next quarter of an hour three more women turned up. The news that a mad Englishman was giving away pennies was evidently travelling round the town. But the last applicant was unlucky: I had run out of small change, so that she was able to demonstrate that curses come as easily as blessings.

It was at Seo de Urgel that I met the Spanish Army. I made my way to the barracks and introduced myself as an old soldier. I was warmly received. It is difficult to make a Spaniard admit that their desultory scraps in Morocco are gnat-bites compared to the World War, but even their pride cannot prevent the internal realization of this truth. I found that a man who had served in a real war was welcomed with honour. My opinion

was eagerly sought as to the respective merits of the French, German, British, Belgian, American, and Portuguese Armies. My interrogators sneered at the Portuguese, at which I was hard-pressed to refrain from smiling. Yet I found that some of the officers had studied the campaigns thoroughly, and I was plied with questions around the break-through of the Portuguese front in April 1918. Sympathies were strangely mixed, but I fancy that many of my questioners had been grieved at the break-up of the efficient German military machine, on which their ideas had been modelled.

I was invited to inspect a detachment of troops. I was not impressed. I was not looking for mere mechanical smartness, which is counted as a military virtue only in England and Germany. But these youths—conscripts, of course—seemed to lack the slightest grain of ardour. The French conscript is as keen as, or keener than, the English volunteer. The idea has been bred in his bones, and he looks forward to his years of service. But in Spain conscription is something to be dodged; you may buy exemption if you are rich enough. So I was not surprised to find that the drill was ragged, since the efficiency of a military movement depends upon the keenness of its individual components.

After the company had been dismissed, I escaped from my chaperon for a while and mingled with the men. If I had been a curiosity to the officers, I was a living wonder to the troops. Excited questions rained in on all sides, straining the narrow limits of my vocabulary. When I returned the charge, I found them full of grievances. Of the complaints about food and

quarters I took no notice; they are common to every Army, whether justified or not. But one could not fail to be struck by the enormous gap between the officers and the men. They lived in two different worlds. The popular, though erroneous, idea of the relations existing between the German officer and his men is very mild compared to the state of affairs in Spain; and this is dangerous in these democratic days.

Both among officers and men I found strong criticisms of the Government, particularly in regard to the conduct of the Moroccan campaign. This conversation, by the way, took place only a few weeks before the abortive insurrection against the Directory in September 1926. I had expected to hear complaints as to the mismanagement of the war, but the bitterest words centred on the Government's duplicity. It seemed that the Directory, anxious to raise money (the failing and curse of every Spanish authority for centuries), had instituted a series of payments for exemptions. On payment of a sum of a thousand pesetas, for example, a soldier became exempt from service in Morocco. Comparatively large sums were raised in this manner, and then the Government failed to fulfil its pledges. One youth poured out to me an angry tale which was typical of the rest. He was an only son, he said, and his parents did not wish him to go to the Moroccan War (it was not that he himself was afraid, the *señor* understood?), so his parents had used their old-age savings to pay the exemption tax of a thousand pesetas. Yet three months after it was paid he had been sent to Morocco! Not only that, but after he had been wounded he had been sent

to the front again! Did the *señor* think this was just? The *señor* did not, but he would have condemned a whole system rather than one phase of its untrustworthy workings.

One of the Spanish officers had a surprise for me. Would I care to inspect a mountain battery? I gladly agreed. He seemed quite astounded when he found that I had seen mountain batteries before; he had no idea that the British Army included any! I gently mentioned the North-West Frontier of India, and his face fell.

It appeared that a battery was to go into the mountains on field drill the following morning, and I was invited to accompany it. I was provided with a horse, but my appearance was not exactly military. I had been wearing *alpagatas* for some weeks, and my feet absolutely refused to enter my boots; I wore loose flannel trousers, a khaki shirt, belt, and haversack. For headgear I wore a cotton hat of the country, well stuffed with cabbage-leaves as a protection against the sun. But even at that I looked more like a picture-book soldier than did some members of the Spanish Army. I sat on my horse in the Paseo de Tetuan and the battery filed by. I would have liked to have taken a motion picture of the march. The only parallel I can recall is the last stage of the Mons retreat. First came my friends the officers, smartly groomed and well mounted. The file of mules followed. It is difficult at the best of times to find a troop of mules with a regimental appearance, but this gang was the most ill-assorted and incongruous I have ever seen. Big mules, little mules, black mules, grey mules, fast mules, slow mules—they ambled irregu-

larly down the street. The nose of one touched the tail of its predecessor; the next lagged ten yards behind. The dismantled guns were packed on the backs of the mules, and the packing was ordered by individual ideas rather than Army regulations. Each mule was led by a soldier on foot. Some of the men wore tunics; others considered them unnecessary. Their breeches were as often as not patched or torn, and through some of the shirts patches of bare flesh were visible. All marched in *alpagatas* and wore no socks; but this is sensible, if not pretty to the military eye. The spare men—gunners and ammunition carriers—strolled casually along the pavement, in approximate concord with the appropriate mule. Did one of them meet his best girl, he stopped and had a chat with her, and then trotted forward to take up his place. I do not claim that methodic precision spells practical efficiency, but, speaking from the military point of view, I should claim with confidence that the battery was of that type attributed by Tommies to Fred Karno.

To be perfectly fair to the Spanish, they put up a far better show in action than I had anticipated. The guns were unloaded and assembled at a good speed. The men seemed keener on this part of their job—with the keenness of a boy playing with his Meccano. Yes, appearance is not everything. I once saw a battery of French ·75's which looked like a collection of old iron with its attendant rag-and-bone dealers, but which had an enviable reputation. Nevertheless, I would be quite prepared to put any one of our Indian mountain batteries in competition with the Spanish, and should be quite confident as to the result of the comparison.

A mile away from Seo de Urgel stand the triplet hills of Castellcuitat. These effectively command the entry into Spain by way of Andorra, and were at one time the most important link in the chain of fortifications around Seo de Urgel. The easterly hill, its cleft side displaying a wound of red sandstone, is crowned by a round stone tower, very similar in design to the Tour Jerdaine at Porté. It is inhabited by innumerable lizards and crickets, and I saw a family of snakes lying in the sun on the cliff beyond. At one time it was the local place of execution, "Gallows Hill." The central hill houses most of the village—a poor, ill-built little place, every house seeming centuries old. A massive fortress —now deserted—surmounts the hill; but it is on the westerly mount that the most extensive castle is to be found, visible for many miles along the valleys. Here resided those Counts of Urgel who so valiantly upheld the banner of Christendom against the Moors. For many years Urgel was the only Christian centre south of the eastern end of the Pyrenees.

I found the gate of the castle locked. As I wandered round the walls, vainly seeking an entry, a Spanish soldier approached me. Leading me back to the gate, he went down on his knees to find the key, which was hidden in the long grass adjoining the path. We entered, only to find a second wall and gate, where a soldier stood on guard. My introduction as an ex-soldier was again a safe passport, and I passed into the castle. I found it occupied only by a small guard of a dozen soldiers. There was no officer on duty, but a bright sergeant was in charge. The soldiers were youths of

CASTELLCUITAT

about nineteen years of age, unsophisticated and uncouth. When I suggested that I should take their photographs, they wished to be snapped firing at some imaginary enemy! Their childish minds were further displayed when they produced the key of the castle, a huge wooden contrivance at least three feet long. It is merely a symbol, of course, and is passed on from one guard to its relief.

We sat and yarned for an hour or more, for the sun was hot. The soldier on guard at the gate joined us, the sergeant apparently seeing no objection. The conversation, as before, consisted largely of questions put to me on the subject of the war. These men were certainly intensely interested, but I could not rid myself of the idea that it was the interest of the schoolboy in pirates.

Then I was conducted around the castle. Alas, its glories have indeed faded! The walls themselves are in an excellent state of preservation, which is remarkable when one examines their loose structure; they are almost devoid of mortar. But the interior is a scene of desolation. Keeps and banqueting halls have crumbled away; miserable hovels for soldiers' quarters have sprung up in their stead. Here and there one stumbles across fragments which indicate the greatness which has once been: here a massive stable and there a great vault wrought in solid stone, now used as an ammunition store. Alas, that Spain has no Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments and no Office of Works!

A note of sadness seems to pervade these fortresses of bygone days. With what hopes were they built, with what care were the impregnable sites selected! They

would succeed where others failed; they would stand while others had fallen. And right gallantly did they play their part; but, though they could not be captured by men, they have fallen to all-conquering Time. In their day they were invincible; a modern battery would raze them in an hour. Ideas change; new methods come and go. Once combative man trusted in himself, then in stone walls, and now in machinery.

There is no railway station at Seo de Urgel. Ten years ago there were no roads, but now an enterprising autobus company runs a regular daily service to Puigcerda, and even to Lerida. Each is a picturesque journey, except for a nervous person. The driver and the road conspire to ensure that the journey is never dull.

I said my good-byes to Seo de Urgel, and walked across the road to the garage to take my ticket. I found that I could book through to Barcelona. The autobus awaited me without. The first-class passengers sat in the seats near the driver; the second-class occupied the middle of the vehicle; and the third-class had the pleasure of riding immediately over the back axle—a pleasure which must be experienced to be believed. Priests occupied the front benches, and farmers' wives with innumerable baskets filled up the second-class. The third-class seats were empty—except for myself. I had a second-class ticket, but in my innocence I preferred the back bench to a limited seat between an angular matron and a couple of hens.

The road to Puigcerda follows the course of the Segre, crossing and re-crossing the river as the natural features dictate. A few years ago the road was but a

mule-track, and in parts it retains its original appearance; but it is now graded as a first-class road, which means that it resembles an English country lane. At times the road is nothing more than a ledge on the mountain-side, with a sheer drop of a hundred feet into the river below. Sometimes a brook runs unbridged across the route, emerging at different points from day to-day—if the driver was to be believed. To the left rise the southern slopes of the main Pyrenean range, and to the right stretches the massive ridge of the Sierra del Cadi, its grey slopes occasionally relieved by a shaggy peak and the brown and red sides of its outlying hills.

There was a large notice inside the autobus, " Please do not speak to the driver." This is an excellent notice. When a man has to drive a clumsy vehicle over a precipitous mountain road, his task needs his undivided attention. I felt that the owners of the autobus had no churlish intent, and I determined to honour their request. Alas, unfortunately, there was no similar notice forbidding the driver to talk! He talked incessantly. After he had exhausted the conversational powers of the first-class priests, he exchanged a little badinage with the second-class farmers' wives. Then, learning from his assistant that he had a third-class foreigner on board, he turned right round in his seat and talked to me. I am not nervous, but there is a limit to everything, and my limit is answering questions about boats while the bus in which I am travelling is wobbling precariously on the edge of a precipice. Eventually, at the driver's suggestion, I took my place beside him as soon as a priest was deposited in a passing village. I was not troubled

for excess fare ; evidently the delights of my company were sufficient compensation.

I was not sorry to take a front seat. The corner of the back row subjected me to remarkable illusions. The bus was built right over its wheels, so that the sides projected a couple of feet. With the wheels near the edge of the road, therefore, the side seats of the bus actually overhung the precipice below ! Often I looked down and tried to calculate in how many pieces I would be picked up.

My friend the driver delighted in taking risks. A miniature depression in the road was not to him a signal to slow up, but rather to try out his car as a steeple-chaser. A bridge-like mound also called for increased velocity, so that the bus might actually leave the road for a couple of feet, leaving an uncanny, unearthly feeling in the throats of the passengers. A loose boulder suggested to the driver that he might do useful work as a steam-roller. An unbridged stream, if crossed quickly enough, ensures an adequate splashing of the people in the rear seats. The bumpier the road, the faster the pace. It is under such circumstances that the difference between riding third and first class becomes noticeable.

My driver would qualify as a film thriller. At one point of the road I saw a snake ambling across it a hundred yards ahead. The driver saw it too, and accelerated. He missed the snake—and the edge of the precipice—by a couple of inches. Apparently this was his favourite sport. He told me that once he had killed three snakes on a single journey. It seemed to me to be

a very clumsy method—I could suggest much simpler ones.

Only two or three villages, old and picturesque, lie on the direct line of route. Yet passengers alighted from time to time, apparently nowhere. A shrill call to the driver, and the autobus would halt on a mountain terrace—no human habitation within sight, and no sign even of a flat space large enough to contain even a hovel. But a woman would descend, adjust her baskets, and commence to climb an imperceptible path up the mountain-side. It is a hard life that these people lead. The Andalusian would starve where the Catalan flourishes.

There is another bus service from Seo de Urgel into Andorra itself. Three times a day the emblem of modernity presses into the mediæval State. Through St. Julian de Loria to the capital, on through Escaldas to Encamp it marches. It is difficult to estimate the magnitude of the changes which the invasion has already wrought. There have been here no centuries of steady progress. The automobile plies along a track where ten years ago no wheeled vehicle had ever been seen.

I once made the journey by autobus from Andorra-la-Viella to Seo de Urgel. (It is not advisable, for the walk is easy and delightful.) The valley was so narrow and the mountains so enclosed that all the scenic beauty was lost, since the autobus is totally covered in. I was interested, however, in the procedure at the frontier. A strong force of guards conducted a scrupulous examination of all luggage. I carried only an Army pack,

but had to tip the contents on to a seat. What a farce it all was ! Your smuggler seldom carries his booty into the country by the main road.

There are several methods of dealing with frontier guards. Some people adopt a servile attitude, treating the guards at their own estimation of importance. This is very unwise; suspicion is certain to be aroused. The second method commends itself more to the Englishman. You cross the frontier with a get-out-of-my-way-don't-you-know-who-I-am air. Before you adopt this method you must study your guards carefully. I have tried it more than once. On one occasion the whole guard stood to attention as I marched by—to this day I don't know who they thought I was. But once I made a grave psychological error and chose the wrong moment. I was lucky to avoid arrest, and escaped only with difficulty, several shillings the poorer.

I particularly dislike the type of customs guard who insists on meticulously searching all kinds of impossible objects. He invariably has a poor sense of humour. Once I adopted a third method. I treated an unusually obnoxious specimen as a personal friend and delighted in demonstrating my belongings to him. I did not understand him when he wearied and told me that I might pass on. I gave him a short lecture—in English—on the mechanism of my camera, with practical experiments to illustrate. I pointed out its folds, wherein contraband might be secreted. I held an argument with myself—in French—as to the relative merits of boracic powder and cold water as a cure for tired feet, demonstrating my little tin box, which might have held two

and a half cigarettes. Quite ignoring the fact that the siesta hour was overdue, I produced everything from my pack and gave a short disquisition on each article, particularly from the customs point of view. Twice he retired to his hut, but I recalled him to point out some object he had missed and wherein tobacco might be smuggled. After he had searched my spare socks and tooth paste for contraband, and had cut his finger on a safety-razor blade, he retired for the third time. Not even my appeal that he would come forth to examine my pyjamas impelled him to sally forth once more, although it moved him to employ many adjectives which I did not understand, but which I am convinced were quite unnecessary for the logical expression of his ideas.

Had I been a Boy Scout, I would have counted that incident as my good turn for the day, for the next person to cross the frontier that day would have a very easy passage.

The road from Seo de Urgel to Puigcerda literally bristles with frontier guards. You will see a couple of them by the roadside every half-mile or so. If they have sufficient energy, they demand to see your passport. It is not necessary to get alarmed if one of them pretends to discover some irregularity in the passport. He is probably endeavouring to augment his admittedly inadequate salary. By the way, it is always advisable to adopt a cautious attitude when paying alleged official dues in Spain. A minor official will blandly demand thirty pesetas for a permit, when the official charge is five. He will not be at all offended if you tell him you only

PUIGCERDA

propose to pay five—that is to say, so long as you tell him politely. A kind word goes a long way in Spain. Extravagant flattery is not an English attribute, but you can always burlesque. The effect is the same.

When a passenger boards the autobus at Seo, you will remark long and extravagant farewells. It would appear that every traveller is leaving his family for ever—hence the long good-byes. Almost unconsciously you smile at the simplicity which makes a five-mile trip to the next village appear to be a long journey. A couple of miles on a Catalan road, however, convinces you that the journey may possibly be infinitely longer than you imagined ; there soon appears to be justification enough for farewells of very protracted duration. After you have bitten your tongue and bumped your head on the roof of the autobus, you take out your watch and calculate if you have time to get out and walk.

The motor-bus is a modern innovation at Seo de Urgel. Ten years ago there was no road there. A mule-track followed the course of the present road to Puigcerda, and the same track continued along the valley of the Segre to Lerida. In parts this track even became a road. I confess that I do not understand the Spanish system of roadmaking. In England we start at one end and carry straight on, or alternatively start at both ends and work on till the ends meet. This seems fairly logical; but the Spanish favour a road made in splashes—a mile here and five miles there. The road leads from nowhere to nowhere, but that is immaterial. Some day, all in good time, the little stretches will be joined up, and you will notice the joins as you ride

along in the autobus. In fact, it is usually at one of these joins that you bite your tongue or bump your head on the ceiling.

Slowly, but surely, the good people of Seo de Urgel are beginning to realize that the era of mechanical transport has arrived. I should not be surprised to find, when next I visit the city, that Ford tractors have been introduced, for I spent a long time explaining the idea to a bright young man at the only garage. It is on such occasions that limitations of vocabulary are most severely felt. It will need all Henry's ingenuity, however, to invent a ploughing apparatus for use on the terraced mountain-sides, where the peasant now ploughs two furrows and then lifts his plough to the next terrace. I can foresee the time when local agricultural visionaries will advocate standardization of terraces, so that a plough in series, with two-foot drops, might be employed.

The garage company is not yet making a fortune. The profits on its four autobuses cannot be overwhelming, since the charges are so moderate and private patronage is almost negligible. Your true Catalan is of a conservative mind in everything except politics. He watches the motor dash by, murmurs a stock phrase about the wonder of it all, and then goes to buy a new mule. A motor may carry you from Seo to Puigcerda, but it will not carry you to more than a dozen of the two hundred villages which centre on Urgel. In the mountain tracks the mule will travel where even the crude *tartane* may not pass. My recollection of the *tartane* makes me wish I had not used up my stock of epithets in describing the

discomforts of the autobus. Comparatively, the autobus to the *tartane* is as a Pullman coach to a third-class compartment on the suburban line from Liverpool Street.

Around Seo de Urgel you will see more of these incongruities which are so common throughout Catalonia. A thirteenth-century street will lead you to a row of semi-detached villas which might have come from Hampstead. I counted over fifty of them along one side of the town, as wildly fantastic as the orange in the mouth of the pig. Not that one can complain, so long as Seo de Urgel does not allow its ancient glories to be desecrated to make more room for more Grand Hôtels and garages.

Unless you have particular interest in this region, it is doubtful if you had ever heard of Seo de Urgel before reading this book. Yet the city has a history which vies in importance with that of any other Spanish town. Its most pronounced phase was during the Moorish occupation, when for many years it was the only Christian city south of the Pyrenees. It struck me that the history of Urgel runs along parallel lines to that of York. The Prince-Bishop and the Archbishop fulfilled similar functions where Moorish and Scottish invaders were concerned. For a century Urgel was the centre of feverish activity. From under its walls countless expeditions were dispatched against the enemy. More than once it suffered reprisals. In the first flush of the northern advance the Moors even captured the city, and after its recapture by Christian arms it endured the torment of more than one siege. Prince-Bishops and Counts of Urgel were alike valiant in service against the infidel. Unitedly they

defended the city against the Moors—on no other point were they ever agreed. When the Moor was not pressing they fought between themselves—either by force of arms or words.

Yet Urgel was an ancient city at the time of the Moorish invasion. Credible evidence points to an Iberian settlement on the site. Five centuries before Christ the valley of the Segre was one avenue of the Celtish swarm from Gaul, and when the Romans arrived they found Urgel a local centre of some importance. The exact date of the Roman occupation of Urgel is not known, but it was probably towards the end of the last pre-Christian century. It is certain that Roman influence swayed Urgel for a considerable period. Before the Romans left—at the invitation of the Visigoths in the fifth century—Urgel had become the principal religious centre of northern Spain. Its Cathedral had already been founded—the first in the peninsula. Three hundred years later it was sacked by the Moors.

It was Louis le Debonnaire (or le Pieux) who rescued the city from Moorish hands. If tradition is to be believed, it was near Andorra-la-Viella that the deciding battle was fought. Louis pressed home his advantage, and recovered Barcelona in A.D. 801. For the next hundred years Urgel was the principal base for Christian sorties against Moorish strongholds in Aragon, until Ramiro II of Leon and the Cid drove the invaders to the southern half of the peninsula. It was early in the twelfth century that the present Cathedral was built—a plain, unpretentious structure, but the centre of a widespread influence.

During the succeeding centuries Urgel appears spasmodically in Spanish history. Its usual rôle is as the centre of a revolt. Any disgruntled prince or would-be king who wished to rebel had a choice of two suitable centres—the Asturias or Catalonia. If he chose the latter, he either began or ended at Urgel. The city was alike suitable for raising the banner of revolt or for a last desperate stand. In 1640 it was one of the strongholds of the Catalonian revolt.

Urgel received more than passing attention in some of the many wars between Spain and France. It was besieged in the war of 1688–97, and again by the Republican armies, when Dagobert did not meet with much success under its walls. Twenty years later Urgel was again in the limelight. In 1820 the whole of Spain flamed into revolt, and Urgel became the headquarters of the famous " Trappist " general or brigand, Mosen Anton. Claiming that Fernando was a prisoner in the hands of the Madrid Liberals, the " Trappist " declared a regency on his behalf at Seo de Urgel. He appointed a Regency Committee which claimed provisional regal powers. Such powers were more theoretical than practical, and the revolt was put down with much unnecessary bloodshed. Urgel experienced a wholesale slaughter of its inhabitants and the troops within its walls. Even this did not damp its military ardour, for in both the first and second Carlist Wars the city was prominently involved. In 1875 it stood a siege of forty days before surrendering to the royal forces.

Fate has not been too kind to Seo de Urgel. Often it has been subject to military force, and always to eccle-

siastical influence. Of late years it has drifted into a backwater in the river of progress. The tide of prosperity which has engulfed Catalonia has only wafted minor eddies through the valley of the Segre. The only manufacture in Urgel is that of priests. It cannot boast the material progress of Barcelona or Lerida. The road has come, but the railway is still thirty miles away, and is not likely to come nearer for many, many years; but for those years Seo de Urgel will remain a city of romance. A casual omnibus cannot take away its charm, nor an occasional Klaxon rouse it from its sleepy dream. It is easy to rest in Seo de Urgel; it is difficult to do anything else.

CHAPTER VI

BARCELONA

I SPEND most of my time at Barcelona in avoiding two things—the Plaza de Cataluna and the hosepipes of the Corporation roadmen.

Had I lived five hundred years ago I would have declared that the Plaza de Cataluna was bewitched, and that—like the famous bird—it could be in two places at once. It is the first place one visits in Barcelona. Wonderfully situated at a junction of noble avenues, a border-space between the old and new towns, it recalls our own Trafalgar Square. One surveys it for a few minutes, murmurs "Very fine," and walks on. But a few minutes later one enters it again from a different angle. It is astounding. I am supposed to have that elusive quality, a "sense of direction"; yet when I deliberately tried to walk away from the Plaza de Cataluna I found myself back again within an hour. Twelve streets centre in this ubiquitous square, and it seems that you must strike one of the twelve whatever may be your direction. So, on arriving at Barcelona, it is quite unnecessary to make the Plaza de Cataluna the first object of your sight-seeing tour. You will be wearied of it within a few hours.

Now at Barcelona, in the summer, the sun is very nearly overhead. The City Fathers, in their wisdom, have therefore caused to be placed a large number of

stone benches in shady places along the principal thoroughfares. This is an exceedingly wise and thoughtful arrangement, for one cannot walk energetically during a Barcelona summer. But the Corporation completely nullifies the value of the benches by employing men for the set purpose of preventing people from sitting down! I agree that in a hot and dusty town it is necessary to water the street: I am not prepared to argue that a hosepipe is not as good as any other method; but no sooner did I sit down on a bench than I perceived a stream of water ominously approaching me. On the first occasion I sat still, believing that the men would be expert enough to water the ground around me without even touching me. As I walked to my hotel to change my clothes I tried to guess as to whether the thing was deliberately or accidentally done. But it happened too often to be an accident—at least, so it appeared to me. Every time I sat down, two men appeared with a hosepipe and drove me away. Sometimes they were content with giving me a casual sprinkling; sometimes I received the full flow in the small of my back. It may be that foreigners are not wanted in Barcelona: the hose men certainly have an effective method of demonstrating this. Men with hosepipes seemed to be everywhere—except once, when I saw a house on fire.

Barcelona is a remarkable town. In fact, it is really two towns. The modern portion gives an idea of what London would be like had Wren's original scheme of rebuilding after the Great Fire been carried out. Yet even in the old town the authorities have been bolder

than ours. A series of great avenues has been driven in criss-cross pattern through the narrow and winding streets. Slums and palaces have been ruthlessly demolished, so that the new thoroughfares might keep to the Roman straight lines. The effect is strange. One steps from the Rambla—surely one of the finest thoroughfares in Europe—into a side street which is immediately reminiscent of the sixteenth century. Around the Cathedral are tiny streets which might have been described by Hugo or Harrison Ainsworth.

The larger part of Barcelona lies on a narrow plain between the mountain of Tibidabo and the sea. Tibidabo is dear to the heart of all Barcelonians. It is their Coney Island, Hampstead Heath, Champs de Mars, and Hyde Park—and more. I suppose it is an outshoot of the Pyrenees, an isolated foothill. A funicular saves the visitor the fatigue of ascending its 1,745 feet. From the top the panorama is magnificent. Barcelona lies spread before you. On a clear day you may see the jagged peaks of Montserrat, the Pyrenees, or even the peaks of the Balearic Islands. Of course, you may not. I didn't myself; I never do. Either it is not a clear day, or there is a ground mist, or the sun is in the wrong place—I never see half the things which I am told I ought to see.

It is often my duty and pleasure to conduct visitors to the top of Harrow Hill, and to point out the features of the surrounding country-side. Turning them to a south-westerly direction, I explain that on a clear day Windsor Castle can be seen. They are always impressed by this. Not that I have ever seen Windsor Castle from the Hill myself, but I have been assured on unimpeach-

able authority that it has been seen. I am told that wonderful things can be seen from the summit of Snowdon. People have even caught glimpses of the Isle of Man. Yet, each time I have ascended Snowdon, only with difficulty have I been able to see my hand in front of my face.

But possibly you can see long distances from Tibidabo in the winter. During the hotter months the air seems to scintillate with ascending heat, and the vision is impaired. However, there is always Barcelona, which lies like a toy town at your feet. Take the field-glasses with you, and you will be able to compare the precision of the new town with the haphazard of the old.

At night Tibidabo is a lodestar. Its summit is crowned by amusements of the flip-flap variety, all brilliantly illuminated. Many, many miles away the twinkling lights beckon to you—and you might do worse than heed their signal. Especially on a gala night does the youth of Barcelona flock to Tibidabo. There is an infectious air of gaiety, and the hundred and one amusements work overtime. The next day Tibidabo may seem dreary, for there is nothing so dismal as a deserted place of amusement. An empty theatre is the most depressing sight in the world.

The northern slope of Tibidabo is not so steep, and you may descend by road. You must pass through the Rabassada, a park wisely left to its natural beauty. In the soft evening hours it is not unusual to find that some of the youth of Barcelona slips away from Tibidabo to wander—in couples—through the glades of Rabassada. The vegetation is prolific and strangely assorted—I saw

a palm, a cactus, and a fir-tree in close proximity. There is a very welcome shade in the Rabassada; one may breathe there pure air which has been cooled by Mediterranean wavelets.

Tibidabo is the first prominence that meets your eye as you approach Barcelona. The second is an object which looks like an American skyscraper in skeleton shape. Actually it is the Iglesia de la Sagrada Familia—the Church of the Holy Family—the greatest architectural freak in the world. It is not yet completed, and I hope it never will be. I would not like posterity to judge the taste of my generation by Gaudi's masterpiece. Some years ago, it appears, a group of devout people became obsessed with the idea of building in Barcelona the largest church in the world. As Columbus came to Barcelona immediately after discovering America, it seems that Barcelona must for ever be susceptible to American ideas. Being true Catalans, the misguided people naturally engaged the Catalan architect, Gaudi, to design the Cathedral. They wanted something out of the ordinary—and they got it.

I suppose that Gaudi is a futurist among architects. Yet he is the very opposite to a cubist, since his distinguishing feature is a horror of angles. A straight line is almost unknown to him—he must get in a curve somewhere. I inspected his famous Casa Mila y Camps, in the Paseo de Gracia. It faintly resembles pictures of haunted caves in fairy books, but nothing else on earth. Inside, the passages slope gently upwards toward the floor above, eliminating the necessity for stairs. They told me that it is possible to drive a horse and

IGLESIA DE LA SAGRADA FAMILIA, BARCELONA

carriage from the floor to the roof. I could not, however, discover any advantage to be gained in doing so. Gaudi's house would make an excellent museum for the works of those artists who claim to be " in advance of their time," or a castle in Spain for the Sitwells. I was told that it was absolutely fireproof, which is greatly to be deplored.

At the moment the work on the mammoth church proceeds at a snail's pace. The original sums subscribed —vast though they were—are merely sufficient to build one end of the structure. Now the funds are exhausted, and work proceeds at the rate dictated by receipts from donations and legacies. Whenever finances permit, an additional mason is engaged, to be dismissed when the income is exhausted. I saw no more than twenty men at work. I was told that the original estimate was to the effect that it would require 800 men to complete the church in 50 years. At the present rate of progress, allowing for what has already been done, the building will not be completed for about fifteen hundred years, which is very satisfactory.

What a contrast between the Church of the Holy Family and the Cathedral of Barcelona! I would not class this as one of Europe's most beautiful cathedrals, but it is pleasing enough to take the nasty taste out of one's mouth after viewing the modern atrocity in the Calle de Cerdena. Its façade is a refreshing variation from the Amiens, Reims, Notre Dame, Westminster Abbey style. A conventional Gothic doorway is surmounted by a well-proportioned tower, flanked by two miniature towers of the same design. The interior is

sombrely majestic: dim windows, high above, shed a misty light which covers atrocities in the shape of gaudy statues, but delicately embellishes the beauty of the architectural detail. (I wonder, are those lighting effects accidental or actually thought out by the architects? The rays of the setting sun are never more beautiful than when they filter through the windows of the Cathedral at Barcelona.) There is a continual succession of worshippers who kneel before the lavish altar. The private chapels are gaily ornamented, for your Spaniard must have his splash of colour, even on his tomb.

They will, of course, show you a large number of interesting exhibits. The jewellery is not so rich as in other cathedrals—I suspect that it has been pillaged more than once. The particular delight of the attendants is the wooden figure-head of Don John of Austria's ship the *Santo Cristo*. During the Battle of Lepanto, it is said, this figure deliberately bent itself forward so as to avoid an approaching cannon-ball. Personally, I do not believe the story.

Adjoining the Cathedral are cloisters which are a delight to tired eyes. Covering a large area, their pillars, arcades, and chapels range themselves around a square planted with lemon-trees, palms, and medlars. A fountain imparts a welcome air of coolness, and an adjacent pond is inhabited by geese. I was told that these geese (or, more presumably, their ancestors) have on many occasions saved the treasures of the Cathedral by giving warning of the approach of marauders. My knowledge of the classics is not extensive, but I seem to recall similar stories.

In the Plaza de la Catedral, in front of the main door, you will find an assortment of beggars. There are three methods of dealing with professional beggars. You may give them the smallest coin you possess and pass on hastily. This is effective, but expensive. You may pass them by with a hard, distant, and unseeing stare. This is also effective, but difficult; it needs constant practice, which can only be obtained in a theatre queue. But the third method is effective and simple. All you have to do, as the preamble to the competition says, is to let the beggar go on talking. He has a set formula of phrases: he knows exactly at what point you will present a coin or pass on. Stand and listen to him, let him exhaust his repertoire of complaints, and he is at your mercy. As often as not, he will blush and shamble away. If he does not, then a little heart-to-heart advice is not amiss.

An able-bodied beggar stopped me as I walked down the Cathedral steps. Mumbling his inarticulate phrases he held out a grimy paw. I gazed at him in surprise. Was there anything I could do for him, I asked. For a minute he was speechless, but then he gasped out his first audible words—he was exceedingly ill. Indeed, what was the matter? His body was all covered with sores, it appeared—he rolled up a sleeve to exhibit to the *señor* a patch even dirtier than his face. Ah, then he could not have come to a more suitable man; the *señor* knew a wonderful cure for his complaint. The *señor* would give him a formula to take to the apothecary, and a cure was guaranteed. I left him on the steps with the piece of paper in his hand and a puzzled expression on his face. I have often wondered if he ever took the

paper to the chemist, and what the chemist said as he read " H_2O " on the paper.

Another man, within a few yards of the same spot, told me a piteous though hackneyed story about his starving wife and children. I let him wander on until the point where he got his details muddled. Then I offered to visit his home. He agreed with ill-acted eagerness, and led the way. It is easy to lose anyone in the labyrinth of mean streets surrounding the Cathedral, and after a hundred yards I was alone.

Some friends of mine work on modifications of the " sympathetic interest " method. One man—who speaks most European languages—makes it a rule to believe that all beggars are asking the way to the post office. In halting French, Spanish, or Italian, as the case may be, he gives them their directions. The ubiquitous extended hand is to him merely a signal to him to search his wallet, explain that he has no stamps, and repeat his directions to the post office. One day I will give his method a practical test; usually I have more difficulty in finding the post office myself.

I have mentioned that Columbus came to Barcelona after discovering America. For many years the people of Barcelona were undecided as to whether they ought to be proud or ashamed, but at last they decided to erect a monument. Southern races have a passion for the erection of monuments; the story of General John Regan might easily be applied to a Spanish town. The monument of Columbus generally resembles that of Nelson in Trafalgar Square. It is a pillar about 200 feet in height, flanked by bronze lions and reliefs illustrating

the navigator's career. A gilded ball surmounts the pillar, forming an insecure foothold for a gigantic statue of the famous Genoese. It was only in 1882 that Barcelona decided to erect the statue, after heated arguments. Sixteen years later the Spanish-American War proved that the opponents of the scheme were right. The monument became the favourite target for elderly eggs and decayed vegetables. Even to-day the feeling of execration has not entirely disappeared. Poor Columbus! Like many another you laid the match to a greater train than you knew; and it is not every man with a new idea who can devote the revenue from the sales of his dynamite to the founding of peace prizes. Modern American history opened with a century of romance, but retrogressed towards sordid slumber. But America is now waking—I do not mean in regard to "business" or material progress. It will be a great day for the world when America renounces the mere brain in favour of the mind.

The situation of the *Monumento a Colon* is certainly magnificent. To the north, the continuous Rambla sweeps to the ubiquitous Plaza de Cataluna. East and west are spacious boulevards, and in front is the great port of Barcelona. It is customary to describe Barcelona as "the Spanish Liverpool." The parallel is apt enough, except in point of size. Liverpool could absorb Barcelona's harbour many times over; yet you will find there that cosmopolitan crowd which is the sure sign of a great port. It was not the big ships that interested me so much. All those ill-assorted brigantines, ketches, and tiny ships of which I know not the technical names—

PASEO DE COLON, BARCELONA

whence came they ? Ask and you will hear repeated the romantic names of the Mediterranean, Tunis, Venice, Algeciras—all these and many more are represented. You may talk, if you wish and can, to men of twenty nations as you pass along the quay. And then, if you so desire, you may board one of the big ships and talk to mariners of England.

Yes, there are times when English words sound exceedingly sweet. I went one night to a theatre at Barcelona. In front of me at the box-office was a young American. I had not spoken my own language for three weeks, so I booked the next seat to his. He was " typical " of the collegiate on his round-the-world tour. His ship had put into Barcelona but for a day—it should have been two days, but they were already a day behind schedule, which was detrimental to efficiency. The amazing medley of humanity in the theatre was of little interest to him. I pointed out Catalan labourers and Castilian aristocrats, but all he wanted to know was the price of suits in Bond Street—the ship was scheduled to reach Tilbury a week later. I can only hope that the information I gave him was accurate ; my experience of Bond Street tailors is not extensive.

The opera was *La Bohème*—admirably played by a touring Italian company. My companion had never heard of the piece—did not even know what an opera was. Did they sing all the time ? Who was that fat girl ? (The prima-donna might have smiled !) Gosh, that fellow could sing ! At a sparkling note he applauded in the wrong place and was hissed to silence by indignant neighbours.

I think that this unsettled him. At the end of the first act he asked if the opera was over. Although I assured him that it was not, he thought he had better be getting back to his navigable hotel. He invited me to accompany him, but I preferred to stay. As he passed out, I thought instinctively of the Rich Young Ruler. Some of the men about me had doubtless spent their last peseta to gain admission, but yet I would rather stay with them than go with him.

You can hear good music in Barcelona. In the season, its opera rivals Paris and Milan, and outshines Madrid. The Catalans are the most musical of the heterogeneous collection of races which go to form Spain. In the Calle del Hospital you will find the Teatro Catala, which is devoted to native Catalan music. The choir is worth a journey of many a mile to hear. A people can sing no music like its own. The success of the tour of the Don Cossack choir was not entirely due to the mere collection of a number of men with good voices. You cannot sing unless you understand the spirit as well as the technique of the music. It is something fundamental that makes England exultantly successful in choral work and a comparative failure in opera. And the Catalan choir sings the spirit of its music with a fervour that Wales never excelled. Competent critics praise its technique, too, but that would never be noticed when the other is so apparent. I have heard better voices in many lands, but I shall hope to hear the Catalan songs yet many, many times.

Yes, you may hear good music in Barcelona. You may see all that is best in Spanish drama. You may also see

revues that would not shame the Hippodrome or the Folies Bergères. They have a pleasant custom in Barcelona, with the idea of giving honour where it is merited. In England the actors have a virtual monopoly of applause. The author is allowed a casual appearance at a first night, and the conductor is sometimes graciously allowed to hold the hand of the leading lady after a particularly intricate musical scene. But they delve deeper than that at Barcelona. Anyone concerned in the production must be honoured if his own contribution pleases. I saw a forest fire scene in a revue : it was remarkably well done and gained tumultuous applause. There were calls for the actors : they took their bow. Then I heard another call which I did not understand, but a man in a dirty overall stepped on to the stage—the stage carpenter who had devised the effects. He bowed shyly as the audience roared their congratulations. He introduced his staff—even down to the boy who presumably fetched the beer for the workmen. This may be another extreme, but I made odious comparisons.

I saw one scene in a Barcelona revue that would have shocked our Lord Chamberlain. No, it was not because of extravagant display of natural femininity—there are not enough English and American visitors to Barcelona to warrant the production of semi-indecent scenes in revue ; you will find these only in a few fifth-rate cabarets. But there was introduced into the revue a religious scene of great intensity. Before a background of angels there was displayed the Man on the Cross : in a prologue I gathered that the leading lady (as a poor

girl) had been ruined by the juvenile lead (disguised as a successful stockbroker). The leading lady apparently took the veil, and standing on the steps of the Cross she delivered a long, fervent, denunciatory religious address to the erstwhile lover. To me it was burlesque, but to my neighbours it was very real. For ten minutes there was awed and silent attention, then a storm of applause such as de Courville never heard. And after the storm, the audience ate its pea-nuts and prepared to enjoy the next scene, wherein the principal comedian gave an imitation of Charlie Chaplin whitewashing a ceiling. A strange people, these Catalans.

The Englishman of regular habits is astonished to find that the theatres at Barcelona do not open till 10 p.m. That is to say, 10 p.m. is the advertised time for the play to start; but no one expects the piece to start to time, and if the curtain goes up at half-past ten no one is likely to protest. It is quite a normal thing for an opera to conclude at three o'clock in the morning. I would not like to keep to Spanish hours for many weeks: the siesta is poor compensation for the midnight hours.

You may see a bull-fight in Barcelona, on almost any Sunday throughout the year. Much has been written about bull-fights—much that is true and much that is absurd. Every man is truly entitled to his individual opinion, but it is ridiculous for us as a nation to condemn the Spanish national game. The only essential difference between bull-fighting and fox-hunting is that the fox certainly has a chance to escape and be hunted another day. To compensate for this—if it be compensatory—the bull has a fair chance of doing some

damage to his enemies before he meets his certain death. But English sympathy seldom extends to the bull—the horses get it all. Poor worn-out hacks that they are, dragged with difficulty into the arena, to be bowled over like skittles. Are they doped, these horses? I looked into their eyes and suspected it. Surreptitiously I stuck a pin in the hind-quarters of one, and it did not flinch. True, they are very near to death, and hardly fit for the knacker's yard. But it is a poor death to die; when they were young and agile the bull would not have found them so easy a prey.

Nearly all the English people who visit a bull-fight make one grave mistake. They do not stay long enough. They gaze wonderingly at the crowd around the arena; they are delighted at the procession of performers, in costumes akin to fancy dress. Then a thrill as the bull dashes into the ring, and a gasp of horror a second later, as a horse is ripped open and its intestines trail along the ground. The brain reels and fails to register. Hardly heard is the humane shout of the crowd, calling for an end to the horse's misery; hardly seen is the merciful dagger of the attendant veterinary surgeon, plunged into its neck; hardly seen is the peril of the picador, nor the waving cloak of the toreador. Before the focus is cleared another horse is gored, and is led from the ring —to be hastily stitched and returned to the fray. The toreadors tire the bull by ceaseless and watchful antics: the matador sticks his darts into the quivering flanks of the charging beast; he takes his sword and his cloak, plays for position, and plunges the steel to the heart of the gallant bull. Amid the applause a team of horses

drags off the bull and the dead horse; the attendants sprinkle sand over the blood. And the Englishman, with a sick heart and a nasty taste in his mouth, gets up and goes out.

And that is where he makes the mistake. Cruel? of course it is cruel! But it must not be judged on that count alone, for it is an art as well, and most artists are cruel. If you see the first fight alone, you see nothing. Gird up your courage and stay on. The next fight will not seem so cruel, nor the third, nor the fourth. You will find yourself unable to repress the excitement of the blood-lust; for, alas, the descent to the primitive is infinitely more rapid than the ascent to the intellectual. And there is much to be seen. Observe the calm courage of the picador—least enviable of rôles!—perched on his Rosinante and awaiting certain unhorsing by an infuriated bull. See the clever way in which the toreadors play with the bull, tiring him out: their cloaks flash here and there; they pass him from one to another as easily as a churchwarden passing a plate. Look at the matador—he stands like a Greek statue. He sticks the gay darts into the bull as it passes. Cruel? Yes, but undeniably graceful. See him leap aside—no ballet dancer did it more rhythmically. Observe the wonderful calculation of distances to an inch and times to a fraction of a second. Watch the eye of the matador, as he watches the eye of the bull—that he may know whether to spring lightly aside or to leap over the protecting barricade. Note the confusion of colour, the blends and the disharmonies. A cruel sport—callous and inhuman—but undeniably artistic.

And watch the bull. If he be of the true Castilian breed, he is worth watching. If you know anything of bull psychology, analyse his thoughts.

Hullo, what's this? Have I strayed into a fancy-dress ball? Who are those queer-looking fellows over there? And what's that thing tickling the middle of my back?

Ah, there's a horse over yonder—I'll just trot over and ask him what's happening. . . . Well, I declare! If I haven't run right into him! Why didn't he get out of the way? Surely he knows that I can't see very well when I'm running. Look, he's going out now—I hope I didn't hurt him.

Now why do those fellows want to wave red flags about? Don't they know that red annoys me? Any sane person knows that red is a horrible colour. I'll just let them see what I mean. I'll teach that man in the gold lace to wave red flags at me! . . . H'm, missed him! I'll try again. Well, I never! Why can't the man stand still? Hullo, here's that old horse coming back. I'll just run over and apologize. . . . Well, if I haven't run into him again! Why didn't he move? Oh, I see—his near eye is bandaged—perhaps he's got a cataract, or something like that. He's lying down now—perhaps he's tired.

Ah, here's another fellow in fancy dress—fancier than the others. What are those pretty sticks he's holding, I wonder? I'll trot over and see. . . . Oh, my goodness! Was that a mosquito? What are all those people shouting for? Well, would you believe it—if those two pretty sticks aren't stuck into the middle of my back! My word, I'll teach that fellow not to stick things into me. . . . Oh, golly! He's done it again! He's stuck two more into me! Here, I say, this is beyond a joke. It's time I had a turn. . . . H'm! Missed him! No, I don't think I'll go to him again—he's got some more pretty sticks. . . . Well, of all the nerve—he's coming to me! Great Scott! Again! Oh, my poor old back!

But this is the last straw—if he hasn't got a red flag, too!

This is too much. I'll show him ! H'm ! Missed him ! Hullo, what's that shiny stick he's got there—wrapped up in the flag ? He's pointing it at me now. I'd better go—oh, my word, he's stuck the shiny thing right into me ! Oh, if I could only get at him ! Why can't he stand still ?

Oh dear, I feel quite funny ! What's the matter with my knees, I wonder ? I feel quite tired—I'll just lie down for a moment. Well, if he isn't coming with his red flag again ! I'll show him—oh, my goodness, I can't get up ! What's happening ? I never felt like this before. I must be ill. I wonder if . . . I wonder . . .

You must go to a bull-fight if it is only to see the crowd. Any crowd is interesting. Study books on crowd psychology if you will, but in this particular science it is the practical work that is entrancing. I like to mingle with the crowds that congregate in London on one pretext or another. If I ever have a Saturday afternoon free I like to slip among the " bobs " at a football match ; the game may be interesting, but I see little of it. Whenever I want a little real excitement, I go to a certain ground and shout for the visiting side. I usually need a new hat next day, but it is worth it. A visit to the Ring in Blackfriars is fascinating—though the boxing is often third-rate. But no crowd has such a varied interest as that of the bull-fight fans.

Sunday afternoon, at five or six o'clock, is the favourite time for the sport. The richer people book their places in advance—empty seats are almost unknown. The more cautious and impecunious wait until the day, and then study the weather. There is a financial reason. The seats around the ring are graded according to their point of view ; they are also priced as to their

position in the shade, the sun, or " part shade, part sun." So the cautious Catalan studies the skies, and if there be clouds overhead he saves half his entrance fee by buying a place in the sun. The English visitor, by the way, should take no risks—two hours under the Spanish sun are almost intolerable.

The crowd begins to collect early. Most of the men wear straw hats of enormous thickness : the women depend largely on their hair as a protection against the sun. Age and sex are freely assorted. A man with a large basket brings bottles of the ubiquitous *gazeosa*. On request, he will hand one to you, and will come round half an hour later for the money and the empty bottle. His memory must be good : I watched him carefully, and he made no mistake. The itinerant vendors are strongly in evidence in Barcelona, and they make an art of their trade. I have never seen so strange a form of salesmanship as that favoured by the pea-nut sellers at a bull-fight. They take up their position in the ring (before the entry of the bull, needless to say) and wait for customers to attract their attention. This is easily done—an auctioneer's wink is sufficient. The customer then throws down his penny, and the salesman throws up the nuts. Their aim and judgment is marvellous. Little bags of pea-nuts were flung to the top tiers as well as to the ring-side seats, and invariably they were so accurately thrown as to be easily caught by the customer. I was fascinated. I used up all my coppers and accumulated an impossible stock of pea-nuts. Every bag —flung from thirty or forty feet below—came unerringly within a foot of my hand. I understand that the

idea has attracted the interest of American visitors, with a view to its adoption. I am not so sure, however, that the method would be equally effective if applied to melons and hot-dogs—particularly while the vendors were in the apprentice stage.

In one important aspect does the bull-fight fan strongly resemble his soccer prototype. He delights in shouting out instructions to the performers. Shrill and contradictory advices are heard on every hand. If the matador took the slightest notice he would soon be travelling skywards. Sometimes the voices join in chorus—as when a whispered "Hands" calls the attention of the referee to something he has already noticed. For the bull-fight crowd is humane after its own lights, and will peremptorily demand the death of a too badly maimed horse, or will signify its disapproval should the matador tarry too long with the tired bull.

The great fault with bull-fighting as a sport is that there is no referee. Providing the performers—including the bull—behave themselves as becomes true fighters, the crowd has nobody to shout at. This is a great loss. If the sport is not particularly good, the crowd must go home sullen—whereas, in England, a loss by the home team can always have as compensation a little excitement in the way of referee-baiting. But football has now taken a firm hold on Spain, and they have not been slow to discover to what varied purposes referees may be put. I am told that a referee who is able to leave the ground without police protection gladly forgoes half his fee. Usually a military escort is required. So it may yet come to pass that some day bull-fighting may have its referees.

I should be glad to draw up a set of rules, based on the English model.

After Tibidabo and the bull-ring, the remaining haunts of the Barcelonese are the baths and the cafés. Yet the sea-bathing at Barcelona is not exactly exciting. I took a *golondrina*—a delightful name for a motor-boat —from the Columbus monument across the harbour. There I found that the whole of the foreshore was enclosed and occupied by bathing establishments belonging to different companies. To my surprise, mixed bathing was only allowed *en familia*. Being unaccompanied, I had perforce to enter the door marked *Caballeros*. A high wooden fence separated this section from its neighbour, where the beauty of Barcelona basked. To catch a glimpse of a feminine figure it was necessary to swim 40 yards out to sea : there the rule was relaxed, for adventurers of both sexes were to be found beyond the end of the fence.

I did notice one strong reason for this display of uncontinental prudery. It soon became apparent to me that the manhood of Barcelona came to the baths to bathe—but not in the sea. The sun was more popular. Apparent corpses lay everywhere. Costumes were reduced to the verge of indecency, so that the men of Barcelona might deepen their complexion. I must drop a hint to those people who advertise " Handsome men are slightly sunburnt." A concentrated essence of their preparation should sell well in Barcelona. The fashionable shade is a deep brown. I saw bodies with complexions in different shades of decomposition. Often one could distinguish several shades on the same body, and

the owner would turn himself over continuously, manœuvring into most uncomfortable positions so as to expose his palest portion to the sun. So bathe the men of Barcelona: I was too modest to contemplate what the maidens were doing on the other side of the fence.

A painful dash over a stony beach, and I was at the edge of the Mediterranean. I strode into the water—and it was like entering a tepid bath. No wonder the crowd was quiet; from the other side of the fence came none of those little shrieks which attend the first dash of an English wave over a maiden's toe. But, in any case, there were no waves. Tiny ripples played gently over the edge of the beach; the rise and fall of the tide measured about two inches. The water was very salt and dense, and a good swimmer could float almost indefinitely. Alas, the water was marred by an occasional drift of litter—I suppose perfect purity is too much to expect at a great port. I am told that the *élite* of Barcelona motor down the coast and bathe at one of the innumerable unfrequented coves which may be found. I commend this idea.

It would be easy to count the number of cafés in Barcelona—one has only to count the number of houses. The Rambla is one long café on either side, with supplementary buffets in the centre. Soft iced drinks are in great demand through the day—and others by night. Seated at the little tables are the youth of Barcelona—and many of its elders. Those who are not sitting at a table are just looking for a table to sit at. The "pub-crawl" habit is so dangerously easy in Barcelona. The tables of neighbouring cafés intermingle.

I take off my hat to the bootblacks of Barcelona. They visit you as you sip your drink—and they are artists at their work. I have a pair of chrome shoes which have driven English servants crazy. I have seen bootblacks of several nations work themselves into a frenzy over my shoes. One man in Paris even refused a tip because he was so disappointed in the result of his own efforts. (No more need be said—if any man in Paris refuses a tip the circumstances are phenomenal. If I were to meet the President I should be wondering how much I ought to give him.) But the Barcelona bootblack took those shoes in his stride. They had never shone before—and they have not shone since. Some day I must take them back to Barcelona.

Overlooking the harbour rises the hill of Montjuich, crowned with its fortress-prison, the Bastille of Barcelona. Built by the Bourbons in 1715, it is a symbol of oppression to the Catalans, and one day it will meet the fate of all oppressors. It could tell tales of untried prisoners and of innocent prisoners. Even to-day, if I was told aright, Spanish justice is not infallible, and politics and crime are freely mingled. So Montjuich frowns heavily on the city below. Yet once its dignity received a sharp affront, for the formidable hill was captured by a small English force in 1705. How Catalan history might have been altered had England decided to stay in Montjuich even as she did in Gibraltar!

Once upon a time there was yet another fortress in Barcelona, which was the object of even more cordial detestation. Built by the Bourbon rulers, it occupied the site now covered by the Parque y Jardines de la

Cuidadela. This fortress was the centre of the walls and fortifications of Barcelona—the pet aversion of all good Barcelonians. This may sound strange, particularly as Barcelona has been called on more than once to stand a siege. But the main purpose of the Bourbon fortifications was not the defence against the enemy, but as an object of repression against the democratic ideas pervading the town. The fact that the walls hindered the commercial expansion of Barcelona was not calculated to appease the shrewd inhabitants. After a century of riots and minor revolutions, the walls and Cuidadela were finally ceded to the town in 1869 and were promptly demolished. The local authorities signalled their joy by laying out the site as a park—one of the finest in Spain. There you will find a variety of vegetation that even Kew cannot excel. Tiny lakes and artificial waterfalls are mingled with museums and art galleries. The park is yet another indication of the strength of Catalan aspirations. There are many statues in the park —there is even a Pantheon; but you may search in vain for well-known names among the inscriptions. The statues are not erected to illustrious Spaniards, but to eminent Catalans.

One side of the park is occupied by a zoological collection—quite free to all comers. Here the children of Barcelona delight to gather. Each animal is a personal friend. The board above the cage may indicate that its tenant is Mr. Ursus Polaris, but to the juvenile visitor he is Juan. Yet these Catalan children lack the spontaneous gaiety which you will notice in Regent's Park. The wit of the juvenile Cockney is quite unknown in Barcelona.

Alongside the park are the Law Courts—an imposing modern building. On the façade are a number of bas-reliefs representing episodes in the history of Catalonia, and the architecture is embellished with a number of statues of eminent Catalan lawyers. Always Catalan, you will notice, never Spanish. Time after time in Barcelona you will see a statue to some Catalan worthy of whom you have never heard, but you may search in vain for statues of mere " Spaniards " of international fame.

Not far from the Palacio de Justicia is an elaborate fountain, the Cascada del Parque. The good people of Barcelona never tire of this, and would not exchange it for the gardens of Versailles. On its surrounding lawns you will see many a family picnic. Should a band be playing you will see the youth of Barcelona by the thousand. Agile-looking youths and girls with clean-cut faces swarm in every direction. You may intercept a passing glance or a whispered word. A little casual flirtation is no crime in Barcelona.

In a little side-street off the Calle del Hospital I heard a band playing in the open. The young people of the quarter were indulging in their favourite pastime—dancing through the night in the open street. The band played alternately old Catalan dances and modern tangos. The couples twisted and turned with as much grace as the cobbled street would permit. It was in the early hours of the morning that I passed by, but there must have been five hundred couples dancing. Not so picturesque as the dance of the Catalan village, perhaps, but affording a rich field for study—I sat at a table at a near-by café. This is not a rich part of the town, and

these people were of the working classes. Most of the men wore black trousers with a shirt of brilliant hue. Jackets had been dispensed with earlier in the evening, for it is warm work dancing in Barcelona—even though the hour be after midnight. The girls wore modern frocks in which colour was the predominating element: hardly a mantilla was to be seen—it is a Castilian fashion and is not appropriate to Catalan beauty.

I mingled with the dancers, and worked my way up and down the streets. In an alcove by a shoemaker's shop I saw a girl, sobbing bitterly. I asked if I might help. She recovered herself wonderfully, murmured thanks and regrets. But trouble was written on her face. I tried light badinage. I said that a young girl should be dancing, not crying; that her eyes should be sparkling, not weeping. The whole human story came out in a sentence. She had been dancing all the evening, she said; but her boy was a seaman, and his ship sailed to-night—he had to rush away ten minutes before. To the world a trifling incident—an everyday affair—but to that girl it was an evening of tragedy. It is difficult to get the prospective joy of homecoming in true proportion against the grief of a parting.

A Barcelona dance band earns its money. One night I sat through a dance. It started just after ten o'clock. The band was mounted on a temporary wooden platform in the middle of the street. There were eight performers—a strange and motley assortment, attired in a kind of evening-dress of their own design. The night was warm, and I saw a jug passed round from time to time. The jug perhaps contained lemonade—or some

other liquid. One waiter was kept busy replenishing its contents, and there was great competition for the first drink after it had been refilled. I saw the leading cornet break off in the middle of a bar to grab the jug and swing it to his mouth. He hardly missed a dozen notes, but he almost emptied the jug—at least, so I presumed, for his neighbour looked very disgusted and the waiter went off again.

The usual Spanish dance needs some vigour in the playing—and the night was warm. At half-past ten the leader drew a large coloured handkerchief from his pocket and mopped a perspiring brow. Seven other handkerchiefs operated simultaneously. At eleven o'clock the leader removed his jacket and handed it to the waiter. On his seven subsequent journeys with the jug, the waiter bore away with him a discarded jacket. At half-past eleven the leader took off his waistcoat—and a little pile was made for the waiter to clear away when he returned with the jug. At midnight eight scarlet cummerbunds were unwound and deposited. I sat on hopefully, wondering what else the band could take off and yet refrain from defying the Decency Regulations, if any exist in Barcelona. Alas, there must be some prudes even there ! At half-past twelve the leader unfastened the buttons of his shirt, but, called to his senses by a wild note from the cornet, fastened them up again.

I was very interested in the man who played the cornet. I believe that it is only within the last fifty years or so that the cornet has been introduced into Spain. This may have been the man who introduced it, for he

would be fortunate if he saw seventy again. A thin, wizened little man he was, with a face that made me think automatically of Evolution. It was not so much his thirst that attracted my attention, but the noise he made. A cornet is not a soothing instrument at the best of times ; it is better than a bagpipe, because you can always stuff a handkerchief up the orifice. I have said that there were eight performers in this band—the cornet player and seven others. I would not have believed it possible for a man of his size to have made so much noise. Even the dancers noticed it.

Now at the end of the street was a group of young men. I do not know if they were Catalans, but I doubt it, for Barcelona is a cosmopolitan city. If the Catalan youth thought that the cornet player was making too much noise, they would tell him so without equivocation. But these young men adopted a method that savoured of Bow and Bethnal Green. They shouted out to him that they could not hear him !

To a cornet player there can be no deadlier insult than this. His eyes blazed, his cheeks distended, and his cornet hurled forth its brazen message with double tongue. The acoustics of the street were not fitted for the shock. Wave-lengths split and sundered in every direction. Echoes collided with one another with the weirdest results. Overtones and semiquavers mingled in hopeless confusion ; and still the young men jibed.

In vain the leader appealed to the cornet player to ease up—he was on his mettle. The dances had to be played more slowly, so that the cornet could obtain full power from each note. The man's reservoir of wind-power was

wonderful; but at his age it was foolish to enter into competition with a group of young men. He had contracted to play for a five hours' dance; but soon after midnight I noticed a gradual *pianissimo* effect creeping over his efforts. Only spasmodic rallies replied to the cat-call choir. At half-past twelve I distinctly heard the note of a violin, for the first time in the evening; and at one o'clock I heard the cornet player no more. He was sitting there, his lips writhing as in agony. Time after time he placed them to his cornet, but no sound came. He was led away by the waiter on the verge of collapse. He had not enough breath left to blow the froth off his beverage.

There is plenty of music in Barcelona. You may be unfortunate enough to hear a Spanish military band. English people may laugh at Continental brass bands, just as Continental people laugh at our operas. When you hear the Spanish military band, forget all about Wellington Barracks or even the regimental depot. Do not even compare it with the pre-war "German" band, or its modern "ex-Service" substitute. I suppose there are good brass bands in Spain: probably they keep them in museums. The only man I know who ever heard one is partially deaf. Perhaps my experience has been unfortunate. I heard a regimental band in Montjuich. I cannot suggest a sufficient punishment—an Eastern potentate might assist.

And yet the string music of Barcelona is uniformly admirable. Whether it be in the theatre or restaurant, café or dance hall, you may hear a string band that can play music musically. This does not necessarily apply

to the larger fashionable hotels, which import English and American jazz bands. I went into a *café chantant* of a disreputable type. From time to time fifth-rate turns appeared on the gaudy platform; and in the intervals there played an instrumental trio which would not have disgraced the Wigmore Hall. I have dined in a lower middle-class hotel (*table d'hôte* 3 pesetas) to classical music played by musicians who understood its meaning.

I think it is generally admitted that the appreciation of music is on a higher plane in Barcelona than in any other Spanish city. I have spoken of the opera and the Catalan theatre. I might be more modern and refer to the wireless. I know that many thousands of English listeners tune in to Barcelona every night, and nearly always get something musically good. I do not mean that the fare is necessarily "high-brow." On the contrary, the lighter type of music is more popular. But there are good tangos and bad tangos, and a good tango, played by musicians to whom the rhythm is native, is a very exhilarating sensation.

I am unfortunate. I have a friend who possesses a wireless set of unbelievable complications. He beams when he "gets" Nijni-Novgorod, and grins at a faint murmur from Alaska. I had spoken with him about the music of Barcelona, and he agreed generally with my opinions. (You have to be very careful in discussing music nowadays; your neighbour in the bus may be familiar with the music of half a dozen capitals.) He invited me to his home to listen in to some Spanish dance music—the subject of our conversation. For two or three minutes he turned knobs industriously: I

began to fear that something had gone wrong with his set, as is usually the case with any set when on exhibition. But then I heard a murmur of triumph. " I've got Barcelona." Sure enough, I heard a Spanish voice announce a selection of items by the band of a certain hotel. The loud speaker could hardly contain the subsequent conglomeration of noise. The band was apparently composed of drums and saxophones. Fragments of an air filtered through a ghastly assortment of stunts. I had heard the air before, but the snatches were too brief to permit its identification. Then I heard voices. I suppose they were singing. It was easy to guess that the bandsmen were singing their own chorus—there is a certain quality about the voice of jazz bandsmen that makes them immediately recognizable. (I do not condemn the singing of choruses by jazz bandsmen ! It is impossible to play a saxophone while singing a chorus.) The chorus was a crude version of an old-English air, and the words ran:

> The more we are together
> The merrier we'll be.

There are people who condemn the League of Nations as a mere ideal, because of the strength of national ideas. It needs no vision to see that Europe is already half-internationalized. We had " got " Barcelona, and all we heard was an Anglo-American jazz band. With a sigh of despair my friend switched back to London, where we heard a cultured French voice reading an extract from Molière.

They have a pleasant custom at the broadcasting

station at Barcelona—I presume it is general there. At 2 LO I have stood in the misnamed studio, its heavy curtains and heavier carpet lending an atmosphere reminiscent of a vaulted tomb. The only other occupant was a bored-looking young man who made minor adjustments to the microphone from time to time. I do not wonder that artists get " nervy." On one occasion I took with me a lady who has faced audiences of all sorts and sizes in most parts of the world. I have seen her face the most awkward situations with a native *sang-froid*; but before the microphone she slipped her hand into mine, and I felt its violent tremble.

Now at Barcelona they provide an audience. I ought to have ascertained whether the audience was professional or not. What an idea for a new profession! Just ten or a dozen people, but quite enough to put a performer at his ease. The broadcasting artiste is the least enviable of all his kind. I do not speak in terms of monetary reward, for that is only one phase of the magnet of public performance; but at no time can the broadcaster feel power—unless his imagination is abnormally strong. The direct performer reaps an immediate reward. The maker of films or gramophone records gets his reward at least second-hand—he can watch people seeing or listening to him. But no letters of thanks or Press notices can compensate the broadcasting artist for what he misses. That is why so many of our finest artistes refuse to broadcast at all. They hold —and rightly—that a performer and his audience should be one entity, and without the one the chain is irreparably broken. There is no sense of power in the

performer before the microphone. He may be addressing an audience of millions ; he ought to feel his power greater than that of Demosthenes—but Demosthenes in his cave was happy compared to him.

I have mentioned the high tone of the Barcelona theatres. In some of the little streets off the Rambla, however, you will find *cafés chantants* reminiscent of Paris and Brussels. Barcelona is something of a cosmopolitan city, and must cater for its visitors. Some of these cafés are quite respectable and provide a reasonably good show of the stereotyped pattern. To some of the night haunts of Barcelona, however, it is not advisable to take your maiden aunt. Most Englishmen who visit Continental cities make a point of paying at least one visit to some disreputable resort " just to see what they do." I suppose it is some sport of the spirit of adventure that impels the visit. The hollow mockery of it all soon sickens the average man, and the knowledge that the show is arranged for his own benefit ought to dispel the romantic idea. How many people judge Paris by a Paris which the Parisian does not know!

I found a troupe of English dancing-girls in one of the *cafés chantants* of Barcelona. It was more respectable than some, but I did not envy their life. Subject to lewd stories when the audience was sober, and to its coarse jibes when the audience was half drunk, it must have been difficult for them to retain their self-respect. They were young girls, many of them still in their teens. An elderly lady—a very typical " pro " of the old type—chaperoned the group : she did her duty conscientiously enough, but as she understood not a word of any lan-

guage but her own, necessarily she missed a good deal. I had a word with one of the girls. She told a story which has served as a theme for a thousand moral stories. Of a respectable family, she had succumbed to the fascination of the stage—that craze for power which develops in so many forms. Her parents objected, but she persisted. She had no talent, but took a course of lessons at a stage dancing academy—" all styles, high-kicks, splits, buck, schottische, etc." Then she was engaged as a member of a troupe for a Continental tour. It sounded well, so that the disappointment was all the more bitter. It was obvious that she only needed a word to persuade her to return home, so I said that word.

You will see life at its lowest ebb in the *café chantant*. I do not mean socially, but mentally and morally. I would rather be an inmate of a casual ward than a habitué of a night haunt. There is something hollow which repulses every finer feeling ; there is something sub-natural that blunts the senses. I would be afraid to spend too long in such haunts lest I should become a satyr. Sometimes the whole affair is so incongruous that it is difficult to restrain a smile—until your eyes rest on the painted faces of the dancing-girls. I am no prude, but the deliberate voluptuousness of the fifth-rate cabaret holds me appalled.

It is pleasant to turn from such a topic. The good people of Barcelona take their normal pleasures in a very different way. Stand in one of the stations on a summer Sunday morning. There are extra trains to the hills—to the hills where one may breathe cool air. The townsmen throng the booking-office for cheap tickets.

You will see father line up in the queue, while mother looks after the children. They are off for the day. One boy carries a yard of bread, another a mysterious packet; a girl carries a frying-pan, and the mother carries a live chicken, suspended upside down in mid-air. They like their provisions fresh in Barcelona. Out on the hill-side father will wring the neck of the unfortunate chicken, and mother will pluck it while he kindles a fire. A day in the fresh air is the height of bliss to the Barcelonians. The more wealthy set off in their cars and wander down the coast-roads. There are countless unfrequented coves where one may bathe unobserved.

It is strange to walk from old Barcelona across the Plaza de Cataluna into the new town. It is like stepping from Houndsditch into Belgravia. There are some fine residences in the new squares—such houses as merchant princes might live in. They are well kept and well staffed. There does not appear to be a servant problem in Barcelona. An English lady told me that it was quite easy to find really competent maids—girls of the type who could be trusted to go off with a basket and do the day's shopping in the most economical manner.

It is the preponderance of the new town in size and importance that misleads the stranger. Most travellers mistake Barcelona for a modern city. Most of it is, but the story of the old town stretches back into the dim pages of history. Tradition says that it was founded by Hercules four hundred years before the birth of Rome. This may be conjecture, but in Iberian days it already

had a reputation as a port. So it was found by the Romans in the century before Christ; from the port their armies radiated into the interior, and they made the town the headquarters of their colony. Even at this time it was a town of great importance in the Mediterranean, which was then the world. Numerous remains fix the site of the Roman encampment as the tiny hillock where the Cathedral now stands. With the collapse of Rome came the Visigothic swarm, and *Barcinona* became their capital town. Always growing in importance (and changing its name with womanly fickleness) *Barjaluna* was the last Spanish city of importance to fall into the hands of the Moors—in A.D. 713. Traces of the Moorish occupation are few, since the period was not prolonged. The last city to fall, it was the first to be relieved. The army of Charlemagne pressed over the passes of the Pyrenees, and the city was restored to Christendom in A.D. 801. From this time onward the Count of Barcelona was one of the most powerful princes of Spain, and Barcelona itself rivalled Venice and Genoa in the competition for supreme maritime power in the Mediterranean. The famous code of naval laws, formulated at Barcelona in the thirteenth century, was universally accepted, and forms the basis of modern international maritime law.

The ruling house of Barcelona amalgamated with that of Aragon, and later, of course, with Castile. But Barcelona's prosperity continued unchecked so long as the Mediterranean remained the centre of the universe. But the discovery of America and of the sea route to India upset the balance of Europe. Great ports grew up

on western coasts, and trade languished in the inland sea. The merchants of Barcelona found themselves on the verge of bankruptcy: the whole city saw its ruin approaching. A scapegoat had to be found, and Barcelona laid the blame on the "discovery" policy of the Central Government. So strong was the feeling that the town rose in revolt and declared itself transferred to France. Such an insult to the Crown could not be passed over. Barcelona was invested by the royal troops, and had to surrender after a siege of over a year.

By a strange change of policy, Barcelona opposed France in the War of the Spanish Succession, and was attacked by sea and land. Again Barcelona offered a brave resistance, and once more suffered the agonies of a protracted siege. When finally it fell, the city was handed over to the mercy of the troops. The scene of massacre, pillage, and wholesale destruction caused a sensation even in days when such things were common.

It was under the Bourbon kings of Spain that Barcelona saw its darkest days. The Madrid Government adopted a policy of stern repression. Whether it was because of jealousy of Barcelona's ancient and potential prosperity, or whether it was a sign of fear of the progressive spirit manifest throughout Catalonia, it is difficult to decide. Not content with the fortress of Montjuich, the Bourbons built a commanding citadel in the centre of the city, and encircled Barcelona with walls which were intended and designed to curb its inhabitants rather than to aid in its defence.

For a century and a half the history of Barcelona is nothing but a series of risings against the intolerable

oppression. Open insurrections were suppressed, and secret plottings took their place. Riots and assassinations followed local wars and tumults. Not only was the military oppression a continuous insult, but the guarded walls stunted the commercial growth of the town. This was the unkindest cut of all. Many years passed before this tyranny was overthrown. Then money succeeded where violence had failed. There never was a Spanish Government but was in financial difficulties, and in 1860 Barcelona was able to pay cash price for the citadel and walls. Every living soul assisted in their demolition with fiendish glee.

Since that time Barcelona's material prosperity has advanced a hundred-fold. It has regained its position as one of the great ports of the Mediterranean. It is the greatest commercial city of Spain ; and it is not satisfied. For centuries Barcelona has led Catalonia in its grievances against Spanish rule ; and to many good people it is no dream when they see Barcelona as the capital of a semi-independent State.

It is a city worthy of a serious visit, is Barcelona. The old and the new are intermixed with a freedom that London cannot excel. Its people are pleasant and of a gaiety not common in Spain. You must assuredly go to Barcelona, but not at midsummer.

I do not pretend in this chapter to have made more than a purely casual survey of Barcelona. There are multitudes of things for the visitor to see which I have not mentioned. Baedeker's chapter on Barcelona is very useful and comprehensive ; but it is not everyone who goes to a town to see its buildings. A friend of mine

recently returned from a visit to Barcelona, and I asked his opinion of the Cathedral. "Is there a Cathedral?" was his reply. I do not commend his attitude in its entirety, for I found that he had seen more of Barcelona by night than by day. But I fear too many visitors make a fetish of seeing each building and monument a town has to show. This is good in its way, but if you neglect to see the town's people it is absurd. History is important, but the present is vital.

And if you go to Barcelona, study its people, for you are going to hear a great deal about Barcelona within the next half-century.

CHAPTER VII

CATALONIA

CATALONIA would be described by the cartographer as a political division of Spain, comprising the provinces of Barcelona, Lerida, Gerona, and Tarragona. This, however, is a purely artificial distinction, and I make no claim to originality when I define Catalonia as the land of the Catalans, describing under its heading not only the Spanish provinces but the Catalan-speaking districts to the north of the Pyrenees. The Roussillon and the Cerdagne are essentially Catalan. Almost as far north as Carcassonne the people are of the same race, and almost as far west as Foix.

Five centuries ago this was one land. If the present status is undisturbed it will be two lands in deed as well as name before another century has passed. The hand and mind of man have accomplished what the barrier of the Pyrenean range could not stay. For many years the Pyrenees were but the backbone of Catalonia. Even after Richelieu took the Roussillon from Spain, thus dividing the Catalans into two, the racial characteristics were unchanged. But modern ideas have revolutionized life in the French portion of Catalonia. It is a matter only of the progress of a few generations. The old people speak Catalan, but the children speak French. That is only symbolic of the change.

I suppose that it was the war of 1870–71 which

taught France to pay attention to internal affairs instead of interminably mixing in foreign politics. Since that time, at any rate, the rate of social progress has been greater than at any time except the brief Napoleonic regime. And it did not take long for the new school of statesmen to realize that France had more than one Alsace-Lorraine on her borders and other neighbours besides Germany. Should France grow weak and Spain strong, a revision of the Treaty of the Pyrenees might be demanded. Now, the weakness of France in the Alsace-Lorraine provinces was that the sequestered districts were not French. Although they had been under French rule for two centuries, at least half of the inhabitants were German, simply because no one had taken the trouble to turn them into French. It is, I suppose, impossible to rob a man completely of his nationality, but it is certainly possible to modify materially all its characteristics within a few generations.

So the French Government turned its attention to the Catalan counties. There was a potential problem—a race of people speaking nothing but Catalan living within the French border. More important still, the majority of their countrymen were subjects of Spain, and one day Spain might speak on their behalf. Obviously, these Catalans must be turned into Frenchmen as soon as was practicable. The adopted policy was a mixed one of encouragement and repression. The Catalan received a flattering attention. He was treated with kindness and justice, but at the same time French was made the only official language. Until then the Catalan valleys had been governed by ancient customs ;

these were swept away, and the national systems imposed. Good roads were made and railways came, and French culture came with them. The Catalan children were sent to school and taught to speak French and to think in a French fashion. The effect has been most marked. Travellers of forty years ago tell us how they passed through villages where no one understood a word of French; now the language is universally spoken. The administration is efficient, the people are prosperous and content. France need fear no plebiscite in the whole region. The echo of the Secessionist Movement has almost died away in the Roussillon. Spanish Catalonia receives deep sympathy and moral support in its struggles against Spain, but the dream of a reunited land of the Catalans has vanished from practical politics.

It is easy to note the contrast as one crosses over to the Spanish side. There is not less industry. For that matter, I am quite prepared to believe that the Spanish Catalan is a harder worker than his French brother, for the sun-baked southern slopes compare unfavourably with the natural advantages of the fertile valleys on the other side of the range. But there is a note of discontent throughout Spanish Catalonia. You will hear the murmurings in the villages; you will hear the shoutings in the towns. It is strange that the industrial worker should be more insistent on individual and collective liberty than his brother of the fields; possibly his restrictions tend to make him realize his potentialities.

The Catalans are a race apart from the rest of Spain. They are as clearly marked from the Castilians as are

the Basques. In mediæval times they were a race as distinct from the neighbours as were the French and Germans. Of Visigothic ancestry, they were relieved from Moorish occupation by Louis le Pieux. At that time Catalonia was known to the Frankish kings as the Spanish March. Its Count acknowledged a nominal suzerainty to Paris, and the district served a useful purpose as a buffer State.

Even at this time the Catalans had a wide reputation as skilful mariners. The Mediterranean was then the sea of the world, and Barcelona was one of the principal ports. Catalan ships journeyed to every port of the known seas. A trade with England was opened up even during the Roman occupation.

It was in A.D. 874 that Catalonia renounced its nominal dependence on France. Wilfrid the Shaggy was Count of Barcelona at the time. He is described as an ignorant man, but he was an individualist and an opportunist. At a moment when Charles the Bald was engaged on the Rhine, his more hairy subordinate declared Catalonia to be an independent kingdom. Defying all attacks, it continued as such for nearly three hundred years. Then it fell a victim to the curse of mediæval politics—the intermarriage of noble families.

It was from the first Ramon Berenguer, Count of Barcelona, that Catalonia received the admirable code of laws that served as a basis for the constitution of so many European States. Even to-day the Catalans claim and receive privileges which are based on sections of this code. But the fourth Ramon of his line did a bad day's work for his country when he accepted the pro-

posal of Ramiro II of Aragon. Ramiro was unfortunate enough to have an only daughter. To marry her to one of his own subjects was apparently unthinkable, so he gave his daughter's hand to Ramon Berenguer IV. Catalonia and Aragon thus became a united kingdom, and with the subsequent marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella in 1469 Catalonia found itself merely a province in a vast territory. True, it retained its own constitution and privileges, based on its ancient code of laws ; but already the wise men of Catalonia saw that the days of freedom and independence were virtually over. Bitterly they cursed the intermarriages which had changed their country from a sovereign State into a subordinate province. Even at that time Catalonia led Spain in progress and prosperity. First to be freed from the Moorish yoke, the industrious Catalans built up their trade with the Mediterranean countries, and by hard labour transformed the hill-slopes into cultivated terraces. The province was the richest in all Spain.

The Central Government at Madrid noticed this. There never has been a Spanish Government, monarchical or representative, which has not been hard up, so when Philip IV decided to make war against France, he decided that Catalonia must pay a large proportion of the cost. But the Catalans decided otherwise. A series of hasty conferences between the leading men of the province led to the raising of the standard of rebellion. Catalonia joined in the war on the French side. The idea was excellent, but the results were deplorable. For the Treaty of the Pyrenees, signed in 1659, divided Catalonia in two. The French annexed the Roussillon,

but disclaimed any interest in Catalonia south of the Pyrenees.

The Catalans were in a desperate plight. A third of their race had been taken over by a foreign Power, the remainder were exposed to the fury of the Spanish king. Right gallantly did the Catalans strive to secure their independence, but the weight of numbers was overwhelmingly against them. After a siege of over a year Barcelona surrendered to Spanish arms. But so desperate had been the defence, and so fierce was the spirit of the defeated Catalans, that Philip had perforce to confirm the rights and privileges of Catalonia.

The province was moderately quiet for half a century, but the fire of revolt still smouldered. The flame burst forth with the War of the Spanish Succession—a unique opportunity. Catalonia took the side of the Austrian Archduke Charles, not necessarily because he was the rightful claimant, but because he promised semi-independent status to the province. Unfortunately, the French supported the other candidate, and Catalonia was attacked on two sides. Its sufferings were terrible ; the fertile lands were a blaze of ruin ; rapine and murder carried terror into the villages. It does not pay to back the wrong horse in international affairs. Philip V celebrated his accession by withdrawing all the rights and privileges which the Catalans counted so dear. Until the time of the Napoleonic Wars, Catalonia was merely an occupied territory. Only with the restoration of the Bourbons were the Catalans placed on a political level with the rest of Spain.

Thus for many hundreds of years Catalonia has

struggled to regain her lost independence; and the struggle is not yet over. The Separatist Movement is stronger than ever it was before. Catalonia claims, with some truth, that it supplies all the efficient internal workings for the gaudy jewelled case provided by Spain proper. It is the richest agricultural province; its manufactures dominate the Spanish industrial world; Barcelona is the greatest Spanish port. Catalonia feels that she pays more than her legitimate share of taxes. Because her people are industrious and the Castilians are slothful, she has to bear the burdens of the peninsula.

So revolt has succeeded revolt, and riot and strike have followed. The last serious outbreak was in 1909, so that another is due at any moment. And the question of separation has really become a matter of practical politics. The Regionalist Party—the moderate Catalan representatives—number forty in the Spanish Parliament. Its leaders are sensible men. They see that the recovery of the Roussillon is now impossible, particularly since the Roussillonais are now almost French. They see that they would gain nothing if Catalonia were incorporated in France, since the modern policy of France is to make French all the people within its borders. So the Catalan leaders have thought out a sensible scheme and have issued their demands. Realizing that Spain is not so much a nation as a heterogeneous collection of races, they suggest a federal union on North American lines. Their own essentials are as follows:

1. An autonomous sovereign Catalan State.
2. A Catalan Parliament, controlling its own executive.

3. A Catalan code of law, based on its ancient foundations.
4. Full judicial powers.
5. Catalan as an official language.
6. A Federal Union of Spain to control foreign affairs, coinage, armed forces, and such-like matters.

These, it should be noted, are the demands of the moderate men—and there are plenty of extremists. The unanimity of the Catalans is that of the Irish who so recently succeeded in obtaining such wide powers. The only differences between the Catalan factions are those of method—political action as against open revolt.

I do not think that the Foreign Offices of Europe fully realize the strength of Catalan sentiment. Generations of oppression and misrule are bound to alienate a capable and conscientious people. It is notoriously dangerous to prophesy, but I suggest that the future of Catalonia will agitate the Chancellories of Europe within the next fifty years. It will be almost impossible to resist such spontaneous unanimity ; and it may be that the pride of Madrid will bow before the growing storm. The comic opera " invasion " of 1926 and the frustrated revolt of October 1927 were merely the diversions before the play. A Jameson Raid may precede a South African War.

The Catalans are waiting for their day. They believe that it will come when the Directory falls, and prophets say that the time is not far away. That which rises by force often crashes by force, and it may happen that a new Catalonia will emerge from the ruins. This is a century of freedom for captive races. Poland, Finland, Ireland, and many other nations have been born

again in the aftermath of war, so Catalonia does not despair.

All this is serious reading. It is now time to take a lighter peep at Catalonia and its people. We will, for the moment, keep to the Spanish side of the Pyrenees.

The Spanish Catalan is a likeable fellow. In the mountainous districts he is apt to be silent and reserved, which is only natural; but in the towns he is more accustomed to the amenities of civilization, including social conversation. He will talk willingly and well on any subject. The Catalan of Barcelona is not socially inferior to the Londoner or the Parisian, and he is superior to the Castilian of Madrid. He is pre-eminently the business man of Spain ; his only serious rival is the Basque, who inhabits the other end of the Pyrenean chain. His towns are industrialized on modern lines, complete with Trade Unions and Factory Acts. He readily absorbs English and American ideas. (I think, however, that his closest affinity is with the Scotch. Many Scottish jute and cotton firms have branch factories in Catalonia, and find that the experiment works very well. The Scottish colony in Barcelona numbers several hundred, and is quite at home.)

No Englishman need fear to wander through Catalonia, for is not England the home of football ? And football has made a mighty impression on the Catalan mind. Twenty years ago the Catalan had few sports and fewer pastimes. In the larger towns there was an occasional bull-fight, and the Basque ball-game of *pelota* (a cross between tennis and fives) was desultorily played. In the villages the sole pastimes were dancing and

singing; and then the English introduced football. (I speak subject to correction; it may have been the Scotch.) The game was well received, and local enthusiasm is now growing apace. The smallest town has its team, and even in a mountain village I have seen the game played. The standard of performance is not great, but that will come. Nor is the spirit exactly what it should be, but the idea is still new. One day good football will be played in Catalonia. Even now the Barcelona team can hold its own against the best English sides. Both the Rugby and Association codes have been introduced, and both are marked out for permanence.

Football has given the Catalans a new idea of the British. Until recently we were to them nothing more than traders. Now they are beginning to realize that we may be more. As merchants, we were trusted, but the more modern feeling is one of admiration and respect. This is a very remarkable thing. There are very few cases on record where the common people of one country can be said to really admire the people of another. The usual feeling is of jealousy or self-complacency. Football has been our most successful ambassador. One day I became a humble attaché of the embassy.

The news that an English *señor* had arrived in the Spanish hill village probably leaked out through the innkeeper. It usually does. And news is the only thing which travels quickly in Spain. Anyway, within an hour of my arrival a small deputation waited upon me. Its spokesman addressed me with native politeness and marked respect. He wished to ask a very great favour of the *señor*, he said. A football match was to be played

that evening between the village team and the soldiers of the garrison on the hill. There was much rivalry between the two sides, was there not; and there was a little difficulty over the provision of a referee. Juan Ubach had hitherto refereed on behalf of the village; but Juan was very small, and some of the soldiers were very large, so that Juan did not wish to referee again. If the soldiers must provide the referee, then it would be the *capitan* Agustin. Now the *capitan* Agustin was Quartermaster of the garrison, and the village team included many tradesmen, so it would not be prudent for them to offend—it was understood, was it not? So that it would be highly acceptable to both parties if his honour would condescend to referee the match.

I consented at once, probably because my national pride was stirred. These good people assumed automatically that an Englishman was a just authority on sport, and to disappoint them would be to lower England's status in their eyes. Not until the deputation had withdrawn did I remember an omission—I had not ascertained the brand of football favoured locally. I had a hot five minutes while my host rushed to recall the deputation. I am a Soccer man myself, and my knowledge of the rules of Rugby is remarkably slight. The deputation returned. Did they play Rugby or Association? Ah, his honour must have misunderstood—it was a game of football that was to be played. How could I make them understand? Oh, of course—how many players on each side? "Usually eleven," was the reply. Usually eleven! A trifle vague, perhaps, but sufficient to dispel my anxiety.

My host guided me to the field of play. The word "field" is almost a misnomer, for not a blade of grass was to be seen—a sloping stretch of dried brown earth. The entire population of the village formed a human touch-line, for of markings there were none. The teams were occupied in shooting at goal—they really were Soccer goals, I was thankful to observe. The soldiers wore bright green jerseys, while the villagers resembled a box of assorted chocolates. Few players on either side could muster shorts, and the idea of playing in cord trousers with the thermometer at eighty must admittedly indicate enthusiasm.

But play they did. After a word or two with my linesmen—the diminutive Juan Ubach and the *capitan* Agustin—I started the game. Within three minutes of the kick-off came the first thrill—one of the soldiers charged a villager in the back and brought him down heavily. Of course, I awarded a free kick. Immediately I received a shower of protests from ten angles, and the goal-keeper was approaching as fast as he could run. I waved them aside in the best Football Association manner, but I had perforce to give ear to the *capitan* Agustin, who rushed to my side. What was there that was incorrect? Such incidents were not considered as fouls in Spain! I felt that, early though it was, the moment of trial of my prestige had arrived. Both teams were gathered around me, the spectators forming a very intimate outer circle. Briefly I explained under what circumstances a charge in the back was improper, and maintained my decision. I was perfectly willing to retire, I said, and let them continue the game in their own way.

I should be very happy to watch it. But if I was to control, then the game must be played according to the rules.

My little speech elicited a chorus of approval, led by the man who had been charged over. The English *señor* knew best, of course—was not football an English game ? Of course they would play as the rules said—perhaps the *señor* would point out whenever they were wrong ? This, of course, was my firm intention.

The game continued. Considered as football, it was not of a high standard. Vigour seemed to be of greater importance than science. But I was tremendously impressed with the respect that greeted all my subsequent decisions. If the man I penalized seemed inclined to argue, his comrades would silence him with the remark that " The English *señor* knows best. The English rules are correct and just." (As a matter of fact, I have since discovered that the Spanish rules do differ from ours in some minor respects.)

The incident seemed to typify the Continental attitude towards the English. The Continentals do not love us, but they do respect us. And as for sport in all its branches, the Englishman's word is always law. No amount of lost championships can eradicate this idea.

A few weeks later I was travelling on the little railway which traverses the Cerdagne. At a wayside station I heard a violent altercation. A heated gentleman claimed that the brake of his bicycle had been damaged in transit. The station-master ridiculed the claim, holding aloft the front wheel and applying the brake, to demonstrate that it was undamaged. The passenger pointed

out that the net effect of the application of the brake was a slight acceleration in the velocity of the wheel's revolutions. For ten minutes the bitter battle of words raged, the whole train awaiting the result. Then the guard had an inspiration. There was an Englishman on the train, let him decide. The English knew all about bicycles—all the best came from England. The Englishman could say if the brake was damaged. I was fetched from my carriage, and gravely considered the evidence. Then I gave my verdict for the plaintiff, and judgment was entered accordingly. The station-master—so recently a torrent of ironical repudiation—accepted my decision without question, and at once agreed to prepare a claim for damages. I walked back to my carriage a full inch taller.

And so I can prescribe a certain cure for those patriots who make it their business to decry England and everything English. Let them go abroad.

I pass on naturally enough to the subject of railways. In Catalonia the railways are Catalan rather than Spanish. Local services are usually run to time—except when held up by late main-line trains. Different companies operate different districts. The staff of ticket inspectors must be enormous.

I travelled one day from Puigcerda to Barcelona. At Puigcerda I met two English ladies who had been on holiday in the hills and were returning to their home in Barcelona. I had intended to travel third—not so much from pecuniary reasons as to seize a good chance of studying the poorer voyagers. But I had not spoken my own language for many days, and the temptation

was too strong. I paid the excess fare so as to travel with my compatriots.

Now after a few miles the train entered a tunnel. This was not remarkable; in a mountainous country it is quite a normal thing for a train to enter a tunnel. But Spanish coal, although packed in beautiful oblong blocks, is not exactly smokeless, so I turned to close the window. It was a very large window, for the carriage was a long compartment of the observation-car type. The window apparently did not fit its sockets precisely, so I gave it a little tap with my fists. Immediately both hands went through the window, and only an acrobatic feat prevented my body from following them. The window was not made of plate glass, but of the ordinary household kind!

My hands were cut in twenty places. A fellow-traveller—a doctor—produced sticking plaster and soon bandaged me up. The conductor stood by, mumbling in his beard. I gathered that he was murmuring condolences and complaining of the quality of window provided. I cheerily told him not to worry, as I was not seriously hurt. Apparently he refused to accept my assurances, for still he hung about. Then I found that he wanted me to pay the cost of the broken window—twelve pesetas. I was indignant; but I did not wish to make a scene before my new-found friends, so I paid under protest. I obtained a receipt, and promised to sue the company on my arrival at Barcelona. The conductor, now that he had my money, agreed that I had a claim, and even told me the proper office to go to at Barcelona.

By this time I had accumulated three billets—my

original ticket, the receipt for my excess fare, and the receipt for the twelve pesetas. But at Ripoll another conductor came aboard, and I discovered that my excess fare ended there, as we had run on to another line. He even tried to claim another twelve pesetas for the broken window. I was quite determined to recover the money when I arrived at Barcelona.

Alas, by that time I had lost every one of my four tickets ! I had been pulling a map from my pockets from time to time, and I suppose I must have withdrawn the tickets as well. Instead of reclaiming my twelve pesetas, I was now faced with the possibility of having to pay everything all over again. Fortunately, the husband of one of my friends was at the station to meet her ; he was a bank manager of importance in Barcelona, and at a word from him the ticket-collector was affability itself. But the company still owes me twelve pesetas.

The railway system of Catalonia is not extensive, judged by the English standard, but is far better developed than in any other part of Spain. A main line runs down the coast from the French frontier to Barcelona, then striking inland to Madrid. A secondary line runs south from Barcelona through Tarragona to Valencia, and another important industrial line passes by Manresa and Lerida to Zaragoza. The railway from Barcelona to Puigcerda will soon be carried on to Toulouse—the course is already prepared. This will then be the most direct route from Paris to eastern and central Spain. There are many other local lines of minor importance, connecting the smaller industrial towns with Barcelona.

Next in importance to Barcelona among the Catalan towns is Tarragona. There is a remarkable difference in size. Barcelona is a large city (its population is a quarter of that of the whole province); Tarragona is a seaside town of about twenty-five thousand inhabitants. Yet Tarragona would not yield its position. It is the seat of an archbishopric which equals that of York in our own country, for the Archbishops of Toledo and Tarragona correspond to those of Canterbury and York in England. The Cathedral is worthy of its high dignity. Its exterior is apt to be disappointing at first view, for the simple reason that the view is so poor. Old houses crowd around the Cathedral, hiding its architectural grandeurs. The site was that of a Roman temple which was destroyed by the Moors and replaced by a mosque. The present building is classed as one of the finest specimens of the later Romanesque period. Its architect is reputed to have been a namesake of my own, but as he died in A.D. 1256 I was unable to claim relationship with any degree of certainty.

The Cathedral is worth seeing, particularly its cloisters, with comic carvings on the columns. But it is the Roman remains that attract the visitor to Tarragona. The town is no older than Barcelona, but in Barcelona nearly all traces of Roman occupation have been submerged in its tremendous growth. At Tarragona the Roman walls still surround the old town. Great massive walls they are, in a wonderful state of preservation. Enormous slabs of stone form the main structure; the wonder is how such stones were placed in position. And yet it is something of a misnomer to

refer to the walls as "Roman"; they were built by Iberian inhabitants two centuries before the coming of the Romans. The invaders merely increased the height of the walls, working on the old foundations.

But it is the Roman aqueduct that makes Tarragona famous to the world. Standing in the valley below, you cannot fail to wonder at its majestic grandeur. They knew how to build, those Romans. You will respect the Romans more after you have seen the aqueduct at Tarragona. It has been described so often that I need not attempt it. All I can say is that it is one of the few show-places in the world which really repay a visit.

Tarragona is a place to which that overused word "quaint" might apply. It is the Catalan Whitby. An artist might walk into the old town and find at any point a fit subject for his picture. Queer incongruities present themselves on every hand. When the town was rebuilt after the expulsion of the Moors, the builders used up the old Roman materials. So you will see crude brick and rough stone intermingled promiscuously; you will see a barber's pole surrounded by Roman inscriptions.

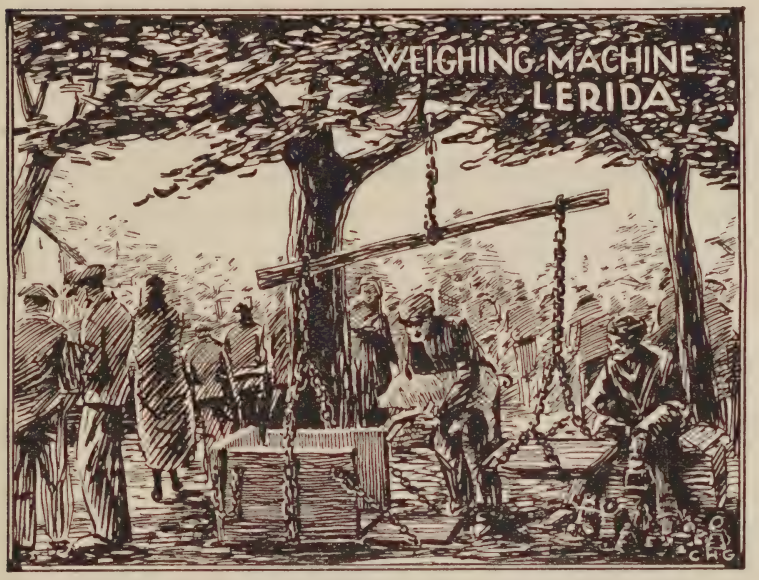
Catalonia swarms with incongruities. You will find electric light in villages miles away from any road; you will find motor-cars in districts where the threshing is done by a crude flail. I am always at a loss as to how to approach the Catalan towns. I never know whether to consider them as prosperous manufacturing modern towns or relics of ancient history. Almost invariably they are both, and the features of both epochs are strangely intermingled. Manresa offers innumerable

examples. The river is spanned by an iron bridge of modern design; alongside it is a stone bridge which was built by the Romans. A stone arch with Iberian foundations adjoins a well-built jute factory.

Both Manresa and its sister-town Lerida were important centres when the Romans landed at Barcelona. Lerida had the distinction of being captured by Julius Cæsar himself. The history of Manresa and Lerida coincides with that of Seo de Urgel. Each has stood a dozen sieges, has been sacked and looted, and has flung itself into any civil war that might be afoot. You can see the recognized " sights " of Lerida in a day, but if you will sit outside one of the cafés in the Plaza de la Constitucion, you will not be bored if you stay for a week. You will see a strange mingling of old and new Catalonia. You will see the younger generation of townspeople, now accustomed to industrial ideas. By their dress you would hardly distinguish them from the people of Bradford. They are shrewd and keen, nimble-minded and intelligent. No modern invention can surprise them. Motor-buses ply daily to neighbouring towns; private cars trickle through the streets, but on market-day you will see the village folk in their *tartanes*; on the head and shoulders of the women you will see the mantilla or the lambskin coat. You will hear the haggling over prices which is peculiar to agricultural bargaining. And close by a factory equipped with the most up-to-date machinery you will see a weighing machine of primitive simplicity.

It merely consists of a beam suspended from a tree; from one end dangles a board to carry the weights,

from the other a box to hold the animal to be weighed. An ancient supervises the weighing. At one time his great-grandfather probably possessed a full set of weights, but now many of them are lost. However, he has substitutes of his own, and everyone understands them. On the little ticket he writes some figures which comprise 110 kilos, two bricks, a brass candlestick, and



a handful of pebbles. The weight of the pig is thus obvious.

The ancient is getting past his job. I saw him in a terrible muddle. The weighing-box has a collapsible flap at each end; the pig enters by one and leaves by the other. Now two farmers approached, each driving a pig. Each collapsed a flap and inserted the head of his

pig. The animals were not on speaking terms and said so. Each farmer then told the other exactly what he thought about men who tried to get their pigs weighed out of turn. While they argued it out, a third farmer induced both pigs to retire—by means of outward pressure on their tails—and pushed in his own pig. The old man weighed all the pigs while the subsequent three-sided argument was in progress, and, I suppose, must have got flustered. He mixed up the tickets. The Catalan's face is not normally flexible, and one of the farmers felt this a disability when he noticed some time later that his fine large porker was certified to weigh about fifty pounds! I never found out what happened to the man who got a note to say that his piglet weighed two hundredweights.

You may see the people dancing in Lerida; for that matter, you may see them dancing in every Catalan town or village. Go to Lerida on a Sunday evening, and you will see the couples there by the hundred. The grey-beards sit around the square complaining that the dancing is not like it used to be. Doubtless their grandfathers said the same.

An old man in Lerida asked me if I had seen the bridge. I had, as a matter of fact, but I would never have admitted it. He guided me along the river-bank to the bridge. Would I like to descend to the river-level to see the foundations? He picked his way from stone to stone and I followed. Ah, now the *señor* would see. The foundations of the bridge—up to a foot or two above the water-level—were built by the Romans. The rest was added by the Goths later. Could I see where

the two sets of stone joined? If I would just move round that pier—yes, just to the left—now, count three stones along—ah, there was a hole! Yes, I could put my hand inside, but only to feel a solid mass in the centre of the pillar. The Visigoths could do worse than build on Roman foundations.

There is a charm in the river-side at Lerida; there is a sad note about the old town, as it watches the growing suburbs. The ancient gates which marked its boundaries are now in the centre. Its old Cathedral is now within the confines of the barracks and is used as a military store. You can sit and think for a long time in Lerida. There is much to see which a guide-book cannot describe. You must not look at Lerida with a Kodak eye.

A camera may be a very dangerous companion on a holiday. It is so easy to begin to think of everything from the camera's point of view. An old gateway becomes merely an excellent snap, and an expanse of scenery merely provokes a mental query as to whether the camera could take it all in; and, once this spirit prevails, your holiday is spoiled.

As an aside, I have never yet met anyone who was particularly successful with photography in the Pyrenees. I cannot fully explain why. It is true that one cannot find isolated mountains of the Matterhorn type to photograph, and I suppose that the Pyrenean groups are too expansive. Once when even a professional photographer showed me a picture of what he said was the Carlitte group, I regret that I ignorantly looked at it upside down. This may be one reason why the Pyrenees are not so well known as the Alps.

Catalonia is almost entirely mountainous, but the pride of its mountains cannot claim any great altitude. Montserrat is a mere offshoot of the main range, but it is the Mecca of the Catalans. " The serrated mountain " resembles an oval blanc-mange, neatly turned out and divided into sections. Montserrat is another show-place, and has been described a hundred times; it had little charm for me. As a natural curiosity it was interesting, but the artificiality of its accessories repels. No one in these days thinks of taking the romantic path up its flanks; the mountain railway carries everyone. And the monks of the monastery do not ring true. Their guest-house is a second-rate hotel, and their stories of miracles are not told artlessly enough to be plausible.

The monastery of Montserrat has played an important part in Catalan history. Now its glory is faded. Only the choir does not disappoint. At Montserrat you may hear Catalan ecclesiastical singing at its best.

The villages of Catalonia are more interesting to me than its towns. You may find no Roman remains there, but you will find no factories or semi-detached villas. A new house is a rarity that will bring visitors from miles around. I have passed through village after village where no house could have been less than three centuries old. I wondered where the surplus population was housed, but found that it did not exist—not in the villages. The Catalan is not afraid of travel; you will find him by the hundred thousand in America. So the younger son leaves his village and goes to Barcelona. He settles there, or he moves on to far-away fields; but he is an asset to the country that receives him.

Did you wish to see something of village life in Spanish Catalonia, I could not do better than to recommend you to visit Ribas. It is easy of access, being on the railway from Barcelona to Puigcerda, only about forty miles from the latter town. It has some unique qualifications. If the season of your visit must perforce be summer, then Ribas is as far south as you can venture with pleasure, for very soon after the mountains descend towards the plains and the heat is intolerable. But Ribas is still among the high mountains. To the north is the dark massif of Puigmal, topping 9,000 feet. East and west stretch the grey slopes of the Sierras of Caballera and Montgrony. Only a mile or two to the south are the gorges called Las Cobas de Ribas, one of the most wonderful sights in the eastern Pyrenees. A rushing torrent pours down a valley less than twenty yards wide ; on each side mighty cliffs raise themselves sheer to a great height. In places the road has been hacked out of the mountain-side. At Ribas itself three mountain valleys converge, each with its accompanying torrent. The mountain scenery around Ribas is really typical of that of the Spanish Pyrenees—gaunt and wild, forbidding but majestic.

At Ribas, too, you may see something of Catalan agriculture. You may wander out to the neighbouring hamlets (particularly to Pardinas, to which the road has not yet penetrated) and see the difficulties with which the Catalan farmer must contend. You need never be afraid to visit these places—the folk are simple and kindly at heart. If you will go to the Hôtel Prats at Ribas you will find a Catalan welcome, a clean inn, and

a host who knows the country. There is still one more attraction. If you are a motorist, you will find that the first half of the road from Ribas to Puigcerda is among the most picturesque of all those available to your car throughout the Pyrenees.

Life in a Catalan village is dour and hard. The soil is fertile, but the natural difficulties are great. A flat space of land is comparatively rare. Usually it is hilly, and when it is not hilly it is mountainous; but the Catalans wax prosperous where many another race would give up in despair. And they do not grumble about the hardness of their lot. All they grumble about is Spain.

A good grumble is a wonderful tonic sometimes. The British Tommy never fought better than immediately following a monologue on his rations, the quarter-master, the sergeant-major, leave, and people with cushy jobs at the base. And it seems to me that the Catalan on the north side of the Pyrenees has lost something of his character because the French have taken away his grumble. In the Roussillon, although I found more intelligence and culture, I did not find that capacity for work that distinguishes the Spanish Catalan from his neighbours in the peninsula. There are iron-mines along the mountains of the Roussillon and the Cerdagne. True, they can only be worked during the summer months; but even then the owners simply cannot find locals who will work in them, and they are compelled to import Arabs from Tunis! I met an able-bodied man who told me that his earnings as a cowherd were paltry. I asked him why he did not work in the mines,

where extravagant wages are offered. He grinned, and confessed that the mines were too much like work.

On the northern slopes of Canigou are the iron-mines of Balatg. I spoke with the manager; his features and accent were alike strange to me. I discovered that the mines were indeed a polyglot affair. They were owned by a Swiss company, worked by Arab miners with Italian foremen, and the manager was a Greek! The ubiquitous Scotsman was there in the person of the engineer who was constructing an overhead wire to carry the ore to the railway at Prades. At the moment all the ore has to be carted down the mountain-side by mule-back—a laborious, slow, and expensive process. There is plenty of opportunity for capital investment in the Pyrenean iron-mines. I suppose it is the absence of local coal that constitutes their principal drawback.

French Catalonia is one of the most interesting regions of the Pyrenees. For scenic beauty the environs of the Roussillon and the Cerdagne are almost without a peer. There is here a greater variety of scene than is found in the western Pyrenees. There are pleasant wooded valleys, but there are gaunt peaks as well; and some of the peaks rise sheer from the edge of the plain. The highest among the Pyrenean mountains are encircled by peaks almost as high as themselves, and one can only get an unsatisfactory glimpse at close quarters. Canigou is one of the secondary peaks, but it has the appearance of the mightiest of the range simply because it can be viewed from sea-level in all its majesty.

For anyone who has but a week or two to spare for the Pyrenees, the Roussillon and the Cerdagne offer

many attractions. Apart from Canigou, there is no part which is a resort of trippers, and the Grand Hôtel at Font Romeu is the only trace of modern affluence. A leisurely trip from east to west—from Perpignan to Ax-les-Thermes—is a delightful holiday. It is off the beaten track, and is a journey easily made even by those who have no physical vigour.

Perpignan, the chief town of Roussillon and the capital of the department of Pyrénées-Orientales, is one of the most delightful towns of Southern France. It is quite unspoiled by foreign visitors. Hundreds pass through Perpignan daily (since it is on the main line from Paris to Barcelona), but their acquaintance begins and ends at the refreshment buffet. But if you have a day to spare, you should spend it at Perpignan. You will not regret it. As a centre for a holiday, too, Perpignan is very convenient, and, not being frequented by tourists, it is exceedingly cheap.

Perpignan has been French since 1659, but you would hardly notice it. The old houses are Catalan in their style and construction. Until fifty years ago Catalan was the only language spoken there. Now the people are bilingual, for the younger generation, at any rate, speak French as well as their native tongue. As Barcelona is the headquarters of Catalan activity in Spain, so is Perpignan in France. But there is a difference. Separatist ideas are almost extinct on the French side. It is recognized that secession from the weakness of Spain is possible, but from the might of France impossible. So the Catalan revival in Perpignan is gradually losing the political character which it once possessed. Not that the

Catalan spirit is diminishing—far from it. Catalan art and culture were never at a higher level or more universally recognized. A new theatre was opened in Perpignan a year ago ; there was no argument as to its name—by common consent it was called the Théâtre de Catalogne. Perpignan still looks for its culture to Barcelona rather than to Paris.

The spirit of the Félibres is strong in Perpignan. The society of the Félibres exists to preserve the language, literature, and culture of Provence—and Catalonia is essentially Provençal. Nowhere is ancient law more carefully guarded than at Perpignan. There is no danger of the death of Catalan songs, for in Perpignan they are sung daily. A concert without some native music would be an absurdity.

There is plenty to see in Perpignan. The Castillet is the most famous historical remain. At one time this was the principal gate of the town—a heavily fortified brick structure of the fourteenth century. Not far away, by the Cathedral, may be seen the ruins of the ancient ramparts which encircled the town.

Adjoining the Castillet are the Promenade and the Gardens of the Platanes, the favourite resort of the townspeople. There may be seen old men wearing the red hat of the *montagnard*, old women with their lamb-skin cloaks, girls in print frocks and *alpagatas*, and little boys eating ice-cream. The summer trade in ice-cream and lemonade must be enormous. The temperature is encouraging.

There are two occupations for the summer evening in Perpignan. If you have a companion of the opposite

sex, you may wander among the dusky coolness of the Platanes; it is very pleasant there. Or you may sit and listen to the band at the Palmarium. This is a super-café of the Winter Garden variety, built on a square which bridges the Basse River. Here you will hear as good orchestral music as you wish: there is a string octet which plays well and has a remarkable repertoire. There

THE CASTILLET, PERPIGNAN

are hundreds of tables, and for twopence you may spend a very pleasant evening. Indeed, you may spend it for nothing if you please, for if you do not press a waiter into your service you are not likely to be troubled. This is so different to most cafés of its kind; usually your aim has to be to make one drink last an abnormally long time.

At one time Roussillon was a county ruled by the

royal house of Aragon and united for administrative purposes with the Balearic Islands. Naturally enough, the kings of Majorca preferred residence at Perpignan to banishment to their island territories. Their castle is now enclosed by the military arsenal, but if you make yourself particularly agreeable to the officer of the guard he will give you permission to visit it. The courtyard of the castle is one of the most fascinating spots I have ever seen. It is not large, but the outlook from its gallery carries the mind automatically back to mediæval times; but some of the halls of the palace are used as ammunition stores.

They are pleasant people at Perpignan. We have remarked how the Catalan has been classed as taciturn because so few people can talk to him in his own language. At Perpignan we find Catalans who speak French, and it is then seen how the " taciturn " illusion fades away. The international boor has not yet discovered Perpignan, so that the traveller is received with welcoming courtesy. I asked an old man the way to the post office ; he insisted on conducting me there himself. A girl in the post office went right out of her way to explain how I could save a penny on a parcel I was sending to England.

It is a good place to shop, is Perpignan. The Roussillonais is not a rich man and it is absurd to ask him fancy prices. If you think to roam the eastern Pyrenees, leave the purchase of your outfit till you reach Perpignan.

They have a pleasant custom in this part of France. In England we give a name only to public-houses, but in France the butcher's shop may have its name too.

In Perpignan I saw a little shop where were sold layettes and dainty garments for tiny bodies. Over the door was painted, not the name of the proprietor, but the inscription " Aux Doigts de Fée." A prospective mother ought to purchase from such a shop with a double pleasure.

At Perpignan are the Law Courts for the department of which it is the capital, and it is here that Andorran cases on appeal may be tried. An exception has been made to the general rule, providing that Andorran suits may be tried in Catalan. Despite this commendable effort to attract business, the Andorran generally prefers to settle his disputes privately rather than to invoke legal aid. Lawyers are not popular in Andorra.

Near Perpignan is the little town of Rivesaltes, famous as the birthplace of Marshal Joffre. It is strange that both the leading French commanders should hail from the Pyrenees, for Marshal Foch was a native of Tarbes.

A few miles to the south of Perpignan is Elne, the drowsiest of villages, but with an ancient history. Reputed to have been founded by the Carthaginians, it was known as Illiberis by the Romans. In the fourth century the Emperor Constantine renamed it Castrum Helena, in honour of his mother. Until 1602 it was the see of the Bishop of Roussillon (now transferred to Perpignan), and the ancient Cathedral still stands on its hill. About its twin towers cluster narrow streets of centuries-old houses. A newer part of the town has been added at the foot of its former magnificence. Excavations have shown that it once commanded the passage into Spain. Hannibal himself made an encampment at Elne.

The journey from Perpignan to Bourg Madame by rail is fascinating. To the left the majesty of the Canigou dominates the scene. Viewed from the north, Canigou is more imposing than any other Pyrenean mountain. Not that it is one of the highest—it is not even the loftiest of its own particular group—but it is one of the few mountains in the Pyrenees which are open to the view. Canigou dominates the mind of the Roussillon as completely as the Tiber dominated ancient Rome. Every peasant feels its influence, for it meets his eye with almost every glance. The folk-lore and songs of the Roussillon centre around Canigou. An ancient cowherd taught me the tune of "Montanyas del Canigo." He need not have troubled himself. Within a week I had heard it a hundred times. It is as ubiquitous as the chorus of a popular pantomime song. The muleteer whistles it as he tramps over the hills; the children sing it at their play. One man informed me that his cat could purr an accompaniment to the tune, and looked grieved when my face suggested that I did not believe him. "Father Canigou" is the mountain to some; "Brother Canigou" for others. It is the friendliest of the Pyrenean mountains. Its northern slopes house a luxuriant variety of vegetation unequalled through the Pyrenees; and its ascent is of the easiest. The popular base for the ascent is Prades, but Vernet-les-Bains is a more interesting centre.

From the village of Fillols—easily reached either from Prades or Vernet—a rough road zigzags its way up the mountain-side. You may journey along this road by mule, carriage, or car. If you walk—the best way of

THE WATCH-TOWER, VERNET

all—there is no need to follow the windings of the road; you will see an obvious path which cuts off the corners. And when you reach the ruins of the house of Balatg, do not follow the road at all. Take the path to the left, cross the river, and climb straight up to the Col de Cortalets. It is not quite so easy as the road, but a hundred times more interesting. At the Col you will see a post to direct you to the châlet on your right.

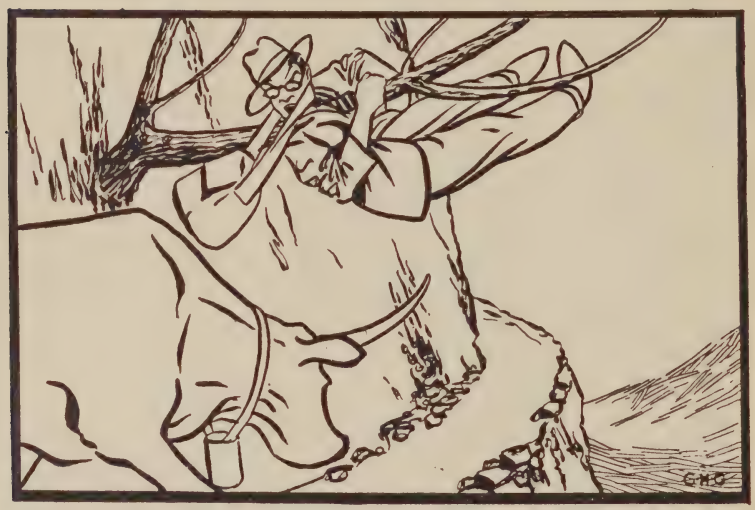
The châlet of the French Alpine Club is a boon. It saves you the fatigue of carrying food, and it promises a refuge for the night should you tire on the way. The good people in charge delight to welcome you, and you will learn what hospitality really means.

At the châlet you are still 2,000 feet below the summit, but it is only a two hours' easy climb. You will pass by a small lake—it is large in winter—and in a great crevice you will find the glacier of Estanyols, which maintains the lake at an incredibly low temperature.

The view from the summit of Canigou has been described by a thousand people, including Kipling, so I dare not attempt it. But if you see one-tenth of what the guide-book says you ought to see, then you will not be disappointed. You need know no fear on Canigou; you should know the joy of high mountains.

I nearly lost my life on Canigou. The responsible agent was a cow. A great herd wanders freely over the northern slope, a bell around the neck being the only restriction. I climbed up a narrow path on the face of the rock, and I met a cow coming down. There was just room to pass, and no more; but I decided I would

rather not pass on the outside. The cow glanced over the precipice and came to the same decision. For some moments we looked at each other. Then I spoke to the cow. I asked her politely to move just one step to the right. On my part I would undertake to press myself flat against the rock, so that she could pass without undue risk. But the cow merely cast another glance over the precipice. Then I became more determined in my



demand. This was a public path, and she had no right to block it. Was she going to move or was she not? The cow did not speak, but I gathered that her intentions were negative. Then I did a foolish thing. I touched her horn very lightly with my stick, pressing it gently to the right. Then the cow moved—towards me. I did not like the look in her eye. I am not in the least afraid of a cow in the ordinary way, but a

three-foot path overhanging a precipice is not the best place for an argument. Remembering an adage about discretion, I retreated. The cow followed. It appeared to have taken a dislike to me. As it approached me it lowered its head, refusing to look me in the face. My retreat ceased to be strategic and became a rout. I admitted defeat. An overhanging branch of a tree saved me from total annihilation; I did an acrobatic feat such as none of my friends could possibly credit. The cow passed below me and stopped. Fortunately, the path was much too narrow for her to turn round. I marched on, claiming the victory; but I looked back fairly frequently.

I believe it was Kipling who, with memories of "Stalky & Co.," declared that Vernet-les-Bains is a paradise for bug-hunters. This declaration reflects no discredit on the hotel-keepers, since it refers to the science of entomology. I can believe it. I was bitten by at least twelve varieties of mosquitoes.

There are always English visitors at Vernet. There is a casino and a delightful park. The hotels are good and not too expensive. But it is the old town which is a delight. Narrow streets wind up the hill-side. Ancient houses prop up each other. Sometimes they fall down together. You may pass a romantic hour in a moonlight walk through old Vernet. The English visitors seldom intrude.

One afternoon I scrambled along the gorges of the brook Cady. I reached a point many miles from any human habitation when I saw a man chasing butterflies. We sat down and talked, for the afternoon was hot. I found him interesting. He showed me a dozen butter-

VILLAGE CHURCH, VERNET

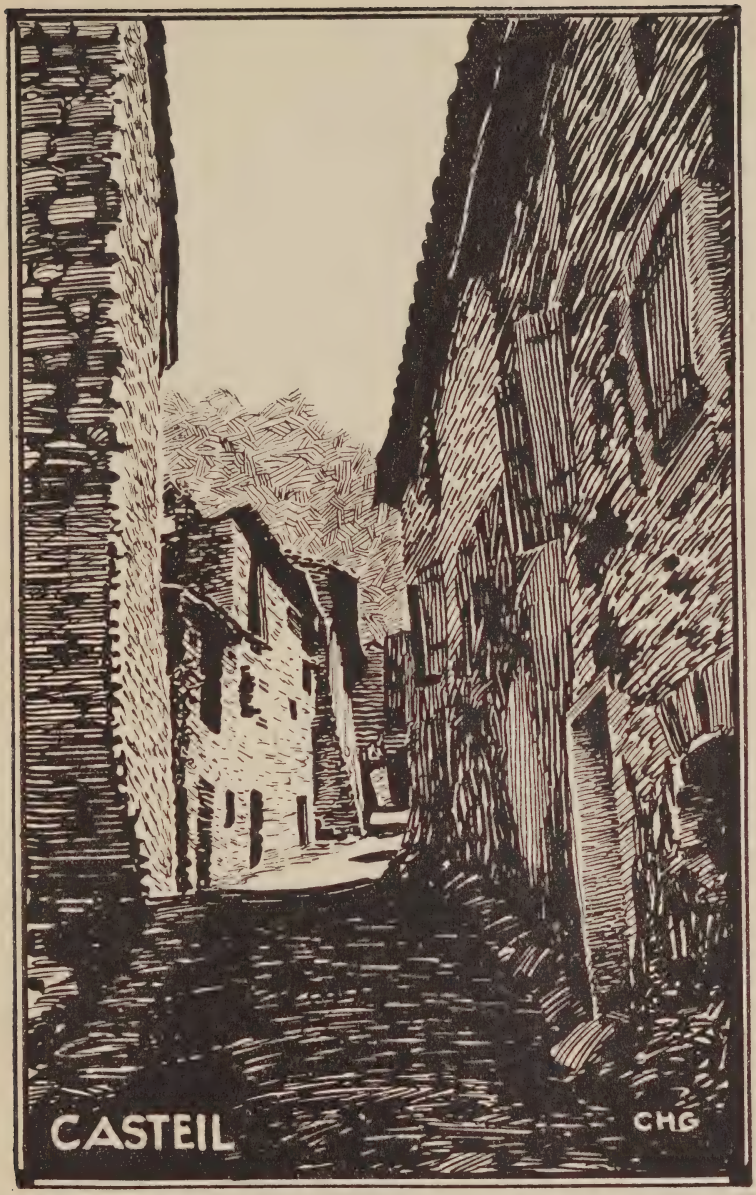
flies of varied hues—his spoils for the day. I noted that his accent was strange ; I judged that he came from some distant part of France. Evidently he thought the same of me, for it was not till after half an hour's conversation that I found out that he was a German and he found out that I was English. He jumped into the air. I know little German, and could not follow his remarks. That was a pity, for they were evidently expressive. They seemed to me to consist entirely of words he learned while in the Army. When, after a five minutes' flow, he recovered himself sufficiently to speak French again, he delivered himself in this fashion (I have omitted unnecessary but highly descriptive adjectives) : " What ! English ! Can I never escape from you English ? I have hunted butterflies in Africa, in America —even in China. I have been off the beaten track in every continent on the globe. I have been hundreds of miles along forest paths and down unknown rivers. And everywhere I go I meet an Englishman ! No wonder you English own half the world ! "

We forsook the subject of butterflies then, and talked politics instead. International affairs occupied us for a while. Then we spoke of the war. He had been a captain in a Bavarian regiment. We compared notes, and found that on at least two occasions we had been exactly opposite each other on the Western Front. Twice he had tried to kill me ; twice I had tried to kill him. And that afternoon we had discussed butterflies for half an hour. " It is a strange world," he said, as he shook my hand in parting. It was no original sentiment, but it struck me then as very true.

We English are a queer race, alternately boastful and modest. We build an Empire and hardly know that we are building it. We pass political measures a generation in advance of the rest of the world, and say nothing. We warn nations of impending doom and never say "I told you so." We fight on with backs to the wall when any other nation would have logically surrendered, and we claim no credit if we triumph in the end. But when we win back the Ashes from Australia the world is not big enough to contain us.

I set out one day on a climb up a mountain path. As I plodded along at my regulation three and a half miles an hour a small party of French climbers passed me. They were swinging along at a rare pace; one or two of them glanced back at me. I sensed the jokes I could not hear. I saw no more of them for five hours. They lay by the side of the path; an amateur could tell that they would not reach the summit that day. I talked with them for a few minutes, and then moved on. As I walked I heard a whispered comment, "Ah, ces Anglais! Ils ne se pressent jamais, mais ils arrivent toujours!" It was a compliment to my race, and I held my head erect.

I always pitied the commanders who had to arrange the Allied attacks during the war. Our methods were so essentially different—the French with their magnificent dash to a far objective; the British with a slow but sure advance. A fast horse and a slow mule are an awkward team; but after the disappointments of 1917 it was the slow mule which had the energy to keep on while the other recuperated.


CASTEIL
CHG

The Abbey of St. Martin de Canigou lies within easy walking distance of Vernet—up the road to Casteil, and then along a well-made mule track. It is not a large abbey, and its architectural pretensions are not acknowledged by the experts. This did not prevent me from admiring the fine Romanesque tower—I often disagree with these " experts," whoever they may be.

The Abbey was founded by Count Guifred of Toulouse as a penitence. Guifred was engaged in war against the Moors, and he thought out a stratagem to defeat the enemy in pitched battle. One of Guifred's detachments was commanded by his nephew, a young man who had just won his spurs. But the nephew was too impatient and attacked before the signal was given. The stratagem was revealed and the battle lost; and Guifred, in a fit of ungovernable rage, slew his nephew with his own hand.

The interior of the Abbey is almost bare. A tomb and an altar are its only ornaments. The statues from the Abbey have been pilfered by neighbouring churches; the bodies of Guifred and his wife have been removed to Corneilla, below Vernet. The Abbey was once the centre of Catalan religious activity; the relics of St. Gauderique, the patron saint of Catalonia, reposed there for centuries. To-day the Abbey is in charge of a caretaker who sells refreshments and looks for a tip.

But the loss of its ecclesiastical dignity cannot rob the Abbey of its wonderful position. " How on earth did they build it here? "—that is the first thought that flashes to your mind. On a high spur of Canigou, far above the grassy valley, built on a tiny square platform

SAINT MARTIN DE CANIGOU

of solid rock in a frame of wooded slopes, Saint Martin de Canigou has a site unique in half a dozen respects. A camera fiend may justifiably spend an hour or two in scrambling about to get photographs from different angles. Good results are easy. Do not miss Saint Martin if you pass by that way.

From Vernet les Bains a little autobus carries you to Villefranche. Some people praise this little town, but I found it unattractive. Its fortifications pale before those of Mont Louis. But the electric railway from Villefranche to Bourg Madame is a delight. Not even Switzerland can produce its like, for the prospect is so varied with the passing miles. Now it runs through a gorge with walls thousands of feet high ; now it crosses a river at a dizzy height, the bridge a marvel of the engineer's art. It passes by sleepy villages and fortified towns ; mountain torrents rush toward it and swirl beneath it. Then it moves along the edge of the Cerdagne ; to the right is the rolling expanse of plain ; to the left a mighty wall of mountains. On, on, on, up and down, in and out, the railway bears you through fairy glens and savage forests, up mountain-sides and down rocky valleys, till it deposits you within a few yards of Spain.

You should get out for a few hours at Mont Louis. Here is the highest railway station in France, as the ticket collector reminded me as I wished him good-day. But Mont Louis is higher still, and you have a twenty-minute climb before reaching the town. It is entirely enclosed within Vauban's fortifications. These are of great strength, for once Mont Louis was a key frontier

town. Now you will not see a soldier in the town. The moat is garrisoned by neat rows of potatoes! Alas, Vauban! You were the greatest military engineer of your age, but you could not look ahead. A battery of field howitzers would suffice against this, your most wonderful work.

It is a pleasant little place, Mont Louis; and it has many distinctions. The postmaster told me that it was the highest fortified town in France, and I could not contradict him. A gendarme—a sinecure office in Mont Louis—told me that it was the coldest town in France. Earlier visitors to Mont Louis do not mention such things, but American influence spreads rapidly.

Three miles from Mont Louis is Font Romeu. There is a hotel and a hermitage. The hotel is a twin of that at Superbagnères. To those who like such things I can recommend it confidently. It is as good as any other "Grand Hôtel" anywhere, and its position is unique. On one side, the Cerdagne stretches for many miles; behind, the massive block of the Carlitte group towers to the sky.

If you are poor in money, you need not stay at the hotel at Font Romeu. There is always the Hermitage, which is a hotel—and more. In parts it is delightful, but sometimes its garish altars and gaudy calvarys pall. But the hospitality is great, and you will never lack a welcome.

Between Mont Louis and Bourg Madame lies the geographical freak of Llivia. How are the mighty fallen! Until 1177 Llivia was the capital of the Cerdagne. Now it is a tiny Spanish island in France. When Riche-

lieu made the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659, Spain agreed to cede the Roussillon and the villages of the Upper Cerdagne. But some of the ancient spirit of Llivia still survived. Llivia was not a village, it was claimed, but a town. Had it not been capital of the Cerdagne? Was not its church once a cathedral? One can imagine the glee with which the old-time lawyers

THE CALVARY, FONT ROMEU

argued the quibble. But Llivia's claim had to be admitted, and Spanish it remains to this day. Completely surrounded by French territory, a so-called "neutral road" connects Llivia to Puigcerda, just over the Spanish border. I would not like to say how far this neutral road assists the smuggling traffic which centres on Llivia. Its only boundaries are marked by the line of frontier guards which surrounds it.

Earlier in this chapter I have spoken of the differences in Catalan life under French and Spanish influence. You can see these displayed with disconcerting clearness if you will spend a few hours in Llivia and then will walk three miles to the French Catalan village of Bourg Madame.

And Llivia will probably figure in history again before long. Many times has France suggested that the little anomaly should be removed. Spanish sentiment has refused to countenance such a transaction; but a bargain may overcome sentiment. Even now it is rumoured in inspired circles that France and Spain are to rearrange their misnamed " spheres of influence " in Morocco. There is to be a good deal of giving and taking, and Llivia is to be part of the bargain. For some privilege in Morocco, Spain will give up Llivia. It is a strange world.

At Bourg Madame you are in the centre of the sausage-shaped Cerdagne. There is a little hotel here where you may live cheaply and well. It is a good place as a base for a journey into Andorra, for Porté is but half a day's march away. You may leave your luggage at Bourg Madame and return via Seo de Urgel and Puigcerda.

At the end of the main (and only) street of Bourg Madame is the international bridge. Here you must pass by the frontier guards of France and Spain. They will not trouble you unduly, and you may pass on to Puigcerda. Once an important fortified city, it is now an obscure country town. It has a temporary fame because at the moment it is a railway terminus, but

soon it will be merely a station on the new Barcelona–Toulouse line. From Puigcerda there is also an autobus service daily to Seo de Urgel, and thence to Andorra.

It is a pleasant journey along the valley of the Carol, from Puigcerda to the Col de Puymorens. A two-mile walk brings you into France once more. The first village is Latour-de-Carol—"the towers of Charlemagne." Twin towers still stand on a rock hillock; once there was a castle here, but only the watch-towers remain. To the north is Carol, where Charlemagne camped after his victory over the Moors, for it was in this valley, you will remember, that the battle was fought wherein the Andorrans won their independence by rendering signal service to the Frankish king. One can imagine an old-time battle on such a scene. The valley is but half a mile wide. On both sides rise the grey flanks of great mountains. Here and there a mountain stream dashes down the cliff-like face; water falls a hundred feet and is dashed to spray on the rocks beneath. In the middle of the valley the Carol rushes hurriedly along. It is never deep, but is sometimes broad. Great boulders lie in its path, to aid the swirl of the waters. At times it leaps down from rock to rock in a succession of foaming waterfalls. It may descend ten feet in ten yards. Tiny eddies branch off great whirlpools. The rocks are worn by the water-swirl of many centuries.

And leading off from this mountain torrent you will see tiny, man-made canals. Not a yard wide, they carry precious water to the cultivated lands of the valley. So small is the space between the mountains that every

inch must be used to the full. Skilful irrigation and continuous human labour drag the means of sustenance from the shallow ground.

The villages along the valley are not interesting, and you must not depend on them for any of your requirements. Of shops there are none ; each village has its inn, but you will not be tempted to enter. A heap of manure usually guards the door against intrusion, and the interior is even less attractive. Even if hunger should compel you to enter, the inn cannot guarantee you a meal—it will depend on whether the lady of the house is at home or at work in the fields. Not until you reach Porté can you find an inn of the best type. I have already spoken of the establishment of Madame Michet.

A mile north of Porta (and therefore a mile south of Porté) is the entrance to the tunnel under the Puymorens Pass. If you are intending to make Ax-les-Thermes in the day (from Bourg Madame it is about thirty miles, but an easy day's march), it is as well to avoid the tedious climb over the pass, and to utilize the tunnel, as suggested in Chapter IV. You will come out into the open close by l'Hospitalet.

But if you are an angler you should go to Porté. Among the Carlitte group of mountains are some of the largest lakes in the Pyrenees, and the trout of the region are famous. I saw an old man fishing in the little lake of Font Vive. He was no amateur ; it was his livelihood, for he supplied the hotel of Madame Michet. He explained his system—just three sharp whips, as light as a feather. The first whip—the trout understands that some game

is afoot. The second whip—he catches a hasty, imperfect glance of the fly. The third whip—he just has time to grab the fly. If he does not grab, you know that he is not there or that he has seen the true nature of the fly. In either case, you move on a few yards. Plenty ? Why, yes, ten kilos a day without fail. Look !—and I beheld an old basket half filled with the beautiful fish.

They are fond of trout in the Carol Valley. At the first meal you pronounce it wonderful ; with perfect truth, you will say that it is the sweetest fish you have ever tasted. The next day your rapture will be increased ; you will discover new charms to the palate which you had previously missed. On the third and fourth days you will write to your friends, telling them of the delightful trout of the Carol. On the fifth and sixth days, while still considering the dish delightful, you will have a strange undefined feeling that you would like a change. You will definitely refuse trout for the first time on about the ninth day. On the eleventh you will hit your landlord if he mentions the word. The moral is to stay in the Carol Valley for not more than four days.

There are innumerable excursions among the mountains from Porté. The ascent of the Carlitte is one of the finest trips in the whole range. While not so absurdly simple as that of Canigou, it is quite easy to anyone in reasonably good physical condition. A lane runs parallel to the Font Vive River, which joins the Carol at Porté. After a while the lane becomes a track, slowly ascending until the little lake of Font Vive is reached. The valley here breathes romance. The world is left behind. The red earths of Carlitte mountains contrast pleasantly with

the grey masses behind you. You are approaching ground seldom trodden by the foot of man. On either side the valley is enclosed by great mountain masses. Even at midsummer you are likely to see clefts of snow above you. Always ascending, you reach the lake of Lanoux, one of the largest sheets of water in the Pyrenees. The scene is almost Alpine. Clumps of pine-trees are scattered over the slopes ; the mountain-sides descend to the very edge of the lake. If you are an angler, you will find trout here. If you are a swimmer, the heat and exertion will suggest a bathe ; the water is cold beyond belief. By this time you have climbed a matter of two thousand feet in a casual kind of way, but now a stiffer climb begins. Lake Lanoux stands at 7,100 feet above sea-level ; the Carlitte touches 9,600 feet. You can see it towering on your right.

Near the southern end of the lake is a rough stone hut, and a few yards south of this (that is, on the Porté side) you will see a path faintly marked at right angles to the tiny stream. Straight in front of you then appears the peak of Las Xemeneyas ; that of the Carlitte is a little to its right. You must climb along the shoulder of the ridge as if you were making for Las Xemeneyas ; then you will arrive at the Carlitte Pass, between the two peaks. Here your path swerves to the left. It is visibly marked in places, but your course is obvious. An hour's climb—not at all difficult—and you are at the summit of the Carlitte.

It is always easy to rhapsodize over the view from a high peak. Fifty summits claim to give you the best panorama of the whole Pyrenean range. They are all

right, in a way. Each vista is the best at the time. I can guarantee that the view from the Carlitte will not disappoint. Around you stretches one of the most delightful and best watered stretches of the Pyrenees. High mountain neighbours abound, but they do not shut off the view. The horizon is many miles away.

A broad horizon is the most satisfying sight in the world. You may experience it only by the sea or on a high mountain. There is nothing so restful; it is a certain charm against the cares of the world. When sleep deserts me, I have a mind-picture which induces rest equally consoling. I am lying on the top of a high cliff, gazing out to sea. Below me the waves make pleasant music on the shore; the air is fresh and sun-kissed; maybe I can hear distant voices of children playing, but yet I am alone. And petty thoughts or minute worries disappear under the influence of the broad horizon. My mind-picture invariably induces sleep of the most refreshing kind.

There should be no terror of high places on the Carlitte. It is a friendly mountain. You can make the ascent from Porté in about six hours.

Just below Porté is the ruined Tour Gerdane, or Tour de Cerdagne, as the maps and guides describe it. The locals call it the Tour des Maures, but of course no one believes them. An old man told me that a king of Spain once died there, a prisoner in Moorish hands. Unfortunately, he could not remember the name, nor could I trace the incident in Spanish history. The tower is a round keep, strongly founded on the grey rock. Of its age there can be no doubt. Its workmanship is

rough and crude. Yet it doubtless fulfilled its purpose, for its position is wonderfully strong. No opposing army could cross the Col de Puymorens without first reducing the fortress, so effectively does it command the narrow valley. This tower has seen at least twelve centuries of history. Visigoths, Moors, Franks, Provençals, and Béarnais have held it in turn; and now a railway tunnel runs immediately beneath it.

The road over the Puymorens Pass is an excellent example of modern mountain roadmaking. It is a continuous, consecutive, gigantic letter Z, and it lifts the road to the top of the pass at a gradient possible to every type of vehicle. Two miles over the brow of the pass is a most interesting spot. Just before the road begins a more violent descent there is a by-lane to the left; and at the junction there is a signpost with the magic words "To Andorra." There is a thrill at the sight —and yet a signpost to Andorra seems incongruous.

Nestling in the opposite valley of the Ariège, on the northern side of the pass, is the village of l'Hospitalet. This miserable hamlet has only one claim to fame—that it is the favourite base for expeditions into Andorra. The innkeepers assume, almost as a matter of course, that their visitors are going to Andorra. Otherwise, why should they stay at l'Hospitalet? There is reason in this—there is no other reason.

Below l'Hospitalet the road descends so rapidly that more zigzags are necessary. (The pedestrian may ignore them and scramble down.) But as Ax-les-Thermes is neared the valley is more sedate. Obviously we are nearing civilization again.

Ax-les-Thermes is one of the least spoiled of the Pyrenean thermal stations. It is the sleepiest of them all. Energy is not a cultivated virtue at Ax. It is pleasantly situated at a junction of many valleys, and it is an excellent centre for those who would explore this part of the Pyrenees by road. There is a good road to Foix in the west and Quillan in the east, each passing through mountain scenery of the most attractive kind. And there is, of course, the road to Bourg Madame which we have already described. You may now go by road to the ancient forge of Orlu, since an electric power-station is now its neighbour.

The road to Foix is interesting to us, since it passes through Les Cabannes, which is the starting-point for the northern entry into Andorra—one of the most fascinating of all. The attraction of these northern valleys is their forestry. Nearly all are well-wooded—a pleasant contrast to the sun-baked and bare valleys on the Spanish side.

Only by artistic license can Foix be included in Catalonia, since its history has long been united with that of Béarn. Yet Foix must be mentioned, if only for its association with Andorra. Foix is the capital of the Department of the Ariège. It is the smallest capital in France ; if it were not for its castle, you would legitimately mistake it for a country village. But that castle is a delight to the æsthetic eye. It is all that a really good feudal castle should be. Its position rendered it impregnable in days of old. Built on a great rock, domineering over the town and the confluent valleys, it could only be taken by slow siege. The triplet towers command the view for many miles around.

The castle was built so far back as A.D. 1012 by Bernard Roger, Count of Carcassonne. His son, reversing his father's name, was the first of a long line of Roger Bernards who made the Countship of Foix famous throughout Europe. Froissart describes the splendour of Foix at great length. By intermarriage with the family of Urgel, the suzerainty over Andorra passed to the house of Foix. Thence, by further intermarriage

FOIX

with the reigning house of Béarn and Navarre, the Countship of Foix passed with Henry of Navarre to the French throne.

You must not expect thrills at Foix. Even the cats close both eyes. All around are wooded mountains—not the wild peaks of Andorra, but the green-flanked hills of Wales. But in Foix itself life—and everything else—moves very slowly. Even the lizards on the quadruple

walls of the castle move only under protest. You will probably have to wake the caretaker before you can gain admission to the castle. If you have sufficient energy, you may climb up one of the towers to enjoy the view. Your guide will sit on the bottom step and sleep until you descend again. You will find Foix very pleasant, but very, very somnolent.

French Catalonia abounds in castled towns like Foix. One is very like another. The first one fascinates, the second delights, but by the time you reach the sixth you are sophisticated and banal; and I was particularly unfortunate. I made my first entry into Catalonia by way of Carcassonne, and what can compare with Carcassonne? To see Carcassonne is to be completely spoiled for everything that follows. They are jealous of Carcassonne at Foix. They proudly point to the four lines of battlements, as compared with the mere two at Carcassonne. But such is idle talk; there is no place like Carcassonne. I will not try to describe it. So many people have attempted this and have failed miserably. I cannot pass Carcassonne without mention, however, if only because of its one-time connection with Andorra, for it was a son of the Count of Carcassonne who defied the Bishop of Urgel.

You see the Cité of Carcassonne as you turn the corner on to the old bridge over the Aude. You will stand and look for a long time—a fairy city rising through the morning haze. Then you will pass on, to see a perfect example of a mediæval fortified city. It is complete in every particular. There are two lines of massive walls and sixty-seven towers; there is a château, a cathedral,

a square, and a theatre. The Cité is still occupied by some six hundred inhabitants.

Many of the foundations are of Gallic and Roman origin. The Visigoths and Saracens added their share,

THE SUNDIAL, CARCASSONNE

and the Franks completed the good work. For centuries Carcassonne was the most important fort on the Spanish border. But the annexation of the Roussillon moved the frontier fifty miles away, and the glory of

Carcassonne faded. In the nineteenth century it seemed doomed to complete destruction, but since then it has been completely restored. The restorations have been extraordinarily well done, except for one serious flaw. Walls and towers have been minutely patched and accurately mended, but the patches are apparent even to an amateur. Far too little attention has been paid to the blending of the new stone with the old. A stone fresh from the quarry is incongruous by the side of its fellow weathered by the winds of centuries. This is the grave flaw in the restorations; and it is one that could have been surmounted without undue difficulty. Our own Office of Works does these things very well.

But there is a charm of concentrated history in Carcassonne. You must not die if you have never seen Carcassonne.

But I have written at too great length about Catalonia. I find that I have written in a desultory and casual fashion, which is just as well. To describe Catalonia in detail would require many volumes, and yet I have hardly mentioned the charms of the land. Within its boundaries you may see nearly every conceivable form of scenic formation. There are gaunt peaks and wooded valleys, grass plains and parched slopes, rocky coasts and mountain streams, good roads and unfrequented paths, ancient cities and modern towns, mediæval villages with aeroplanes overhead—and on and on and on. Think of any combination, logical or incongruous, and you may apply it to Catalonia. And you will find there a pleasant people of ancient race, whose history

is not yet entirely written. You may watch through the years that come, and you will find the name of Catalonia always more frequently mentioned. If you are a traveller of more than the tripper standard, then you ought to visit Andorra and Catalonia. You will not be disappointed.

CHAPTER VIII

WAYS AND MEANS

This chapter will interest you very little until you actually propose to make a visit to Andorra or its environs. I hope that I have been able to indicate the type of people who would enjoy such a visit. I do not wish to mislead anyone, for Andorra will either thrill you or bore you stiff. But, presuming that you have decided to make the journey, I want to indicate the most interesting and practical routes. Not for one moment do I suggest that you should keep slavishly to any one of them. Vary them as you will, or interchange one with another; but they will at any rate show you the most desirable places from the point of view which this book should have revealed, and will also tell what can be done in the time at your disposal.

I will consider the pedestrian first, because the choices open to him are by far the widest. To the healthy, able-bodied man in good physical condition, with a fortnight at his disposal, I recommend a route as under. The figures represent the number of days occupied, counting departure from London as the first day.

Route A.

1. London to Paris. Leave Paris by the night train.
2. Change at Toulouse for the local train to Ax-les-Thermes.

Descend for three or four hours at Foix, and pass on to Ax by a later train. Spend the night at Ax.

3. Tramp up the Ariège Valley to l'Hospitalet, and over the Puymorens Pass to Porté. This is an easy tramp of twenty miles on a good road, with one serious climb. It is a useful " breaking in."
4. Spend the day in practice climbing. Walk down the Carol Valley to Porta, and then make for the Porteille Blanche d'Andorra. You should reach the pass by midday, and then return to Porté.
5. Ascend the Carlitte.
6. You should now be prepared for the journey into Andorra. Proceed over the Col de Puymorens and either the Porte de Soldeu or the Porte d'Embalire, as already described, and make Escaldas in the day.
7. Take an easy day—you will probably need it. In the morning walk into Andorra-la-Viella. Later, take a stroll up the Valcivera Valley. Make Escaldas your headquarters.
8. Walk, via Andorra-la-Viella, to Massana and Ordino. From Ordino cross to Canillo by the Col d'Ordino, and return to Escaldas via Encamp.
9. Walk to Seo de Urgel, via St. Julian de Loria. This is an easy day's journey.
10. Explore Seo de Urgel and walk around Castellcuitat.
11. To Barcelona. Take the morning autobus to Puigcerda (or, if you have a day to spare, walk) and you will arrive in Barcelona the same evening.
12. In Barcelona.
13. Make an excursion to Tarragona or Montserrat.
14. Leave Barcelona very early. Get off the train at Carcassonne. After a few hours there, take the night train for Paris.
15. Paris and London.

Here is an alternative route which is just as good :

ROUTE B.

1. London to Paris. Leave by the night train.
2. Arrive at Carcassonne in the early morning, Visit the Cité, and pass on to Perpignan via Quillan (not Narbonne). Spend the night at Perpignan.
3. By train to Vernet les Bains in the morning. Spend the rest of the day in visiting the Abbey of St. Martin de Canigou, and in practice tramping along the adjacent valleys.
4. Ascend Canigou, and return to Prades.
5. Take an early train to Mont Louis. Then tramp via Font Romeu, the Chaos of Targassone, and Ur to Bourg Madame. If you make good time, make the detour into Llivia.
6. Cross the frontier into Puigcerda. Spend a couple of hours in the town. Then tramp north to Porté or l'Hospitalet.
7. Into Andorra.

The rest of the itinerary follows as before, except that you would have to save a day somewhere, if you had only a fortnight to spare. Actually it is always advisable to have a day or two in hand. Accidents of weather may delay you.

Time your visit so that you spend a Sunday in Barcelona ; then you can see a bull-fight.

If you do not wish to make the journey to Barcelona, you may plan a delightful tour by a combination by both routes. This would work out as follows :

ROUTE C.

1 to 10. As in Route A.
11. Take the autobus to Puigcerda and cross to Bourg Madame. Visit Llivia and return the same day.

12. Take the electric railway to Mont Louis. Descend for two hours, and take the following train to Villefranche. Thence bus to Vernet les Bains.
13. Ascend Canigou, and descend to Prades.
14. Early train to Perpignan, thence to Carcassonne.
15. Paris and London.

A man with more time at his disposal may choose between two alternatives. He may pass along one of these routes at a more leisurely pace. This would be an excellent choice. Not only would he be able to venture along the unfrequented side-tracks, which are such a fascinating feature of the region, but he would have an infinitely better opportunity of observing the people. Yet his second alternative is equally attractive: he may pass on to some other part of the Pyrenees. If he so wishes, he may do this by the agency of the chars-à-bancs of the Route des Pyrénées; but to a pedestrian I would rather recommend the following itinerary, which covers a large proportion of the finest spots in the range:

ROUTE D.

1 to 13. As in Route C.
14. Early train to Perpignan. After a few hours in the town, by train along the coast to Barcelona.
15. In Barcelona. (Add here two or three days more, if to spare.)
16. Train via Manresa and Monzon to Barbastro.
17. Autobus to Broto, along the Cinca Valley.
18. Over the pass of Gavarnie to Gavarnie, a hard day's tramp.
19. An easy day's walk to Luz.
20. By train to Lourdes.
21. By train to Pau.
22. By train to Bordeaux.
23 and 24. Paris and London.

Any of these routes may easily be amended so as to permit the entry into Andorra by the other passes mentioned in Chapter IV. Every day's journey may be altered as desired—I have merely indicated general schemes in which the maximum of wonderful scenery, historic spots, and good tramping may be attained in the minimum of time. Furthermore, reasonable accommodation may be obtained at any of the stopping-places I have mentioned.

A few practical hints might not be amiss to trampers unacquainted with the Pyrenees. You will, of course, read Mr. Hilaire Belloc's classic, *The Pyrenees*. This comprehensive and delightful volume is admirable in nearly every respect. Read it carefully with but three reservations. 1. It is not necessarily up to date. This is not Mr. Belloc's fault. Development is thriving in the Pyrenees, and you may find a good road where he describes a mule track. 2. Mr. Belloc is rather pessimistic. In almost every instance, when I covered his ground, I found the journey very much easier than he had led me to believe, and found the track plainly before me when he had led me to expect difficulties. 3. It is unnecessary to carry more than a small proportion of the equipment he mentions. To take but one example—the water of the Pyrenean streams is delightful to drink, so you need not carry a gourd full of wine. In spite of these failings, Mr. Belloc's book remains far in advance of any other on the subject of the Pyrenees.

Every writer giving hints to trampers commences in the same manner—by advising his readers not to carry

an ounce more than is necessary. This is the most sensible advice that could be offered, but it is persistently ignored. It is surprising how little you really do need for a tramp of two or three weeks. For a knapsack you want nothing better than an army pack—it is the best possible. The usual form of rucksack carries the weight too low. A single change of underclothes (quite thin, for it is warm in the summer, even on the mountains. You can get washing done wherever you halt for a couple of days), an extra pair of socks, a light-weight mackintosh, your food for the day, and an extra day's iron rations for emergencies, and your main requirements are met if you do not propose to camp out. An unnecessary ounce becomes a pound by the end of the day. This is not an original thought: I have heard it said many times, yet I fall into the trap myself on almost every tramp, and almost invariably throw something away.

For footwear, you should buy a pair of *alpagatas* at the first hill town you reach. (They are called *sandales* or *espadrilles* on the French side, by the way.) These are calico slippers with jute soles, and are fixed on to the foot by the aid of a tape. A pair costs about seven francs. They are infinitely superior to boots for tramping over the mountains: they do not slip, nor are the soles damaged by sharp rocks. But they have their disadvantages. They have no heels, and the foot misses its usual support, particularly when walking on a hard road. Try walking for twenty miles in a pair of tennis slippers and you will experience the feeling. I usually surmount the difficulty by carrying both boots and *alpagatas*, and

change from one to the other as the route dictates. Sometimes I change twenty times a day, but it is worth it.

You must have something light and yet substantial for headgear. A folding felt hat will do, and you should stuff the crown with a wet handkerchief or some cabbage-leaves as a protection against the sun.

Every tramper has his own ideas on costume. A khaki shirt is deservedly popular; khaki shorts are sensible for tramping purposes, but stamp the wearer at once as an English tourist. Plus fours are too heavy and cumbersome. For myself, I wear a pair of old flannel trousers, widely cut—about one-third of the way between the normal and the "Oxford" variety. These have the advantages of lightness and freedom of movement, and yet are not sufficiently *bizarre* to attract attention. To ladies I can make no recommendations, except that they should wear light frocks that hang from the shoulder in preference to the cumbersome tweed skirt.

We must not neglect the interests of those people who, by reason of age or physical incapacity, are unable to undertake very energetic excursions. While they must of necessity lose a good deal of what the pedestrian gains, they can see Andorra and Catalonia to some extent without any great exertion. Here is a suggested route:

ROUTE E.

1 and 2. As in Route A.

3. Autobus to Bourg Madame, via the Puymorens Pass and the valleys of the Ariège and the Carol.

4. Take the hotel cab (I use the word "cab" because I know of no other which approximately fits the antiquated vehicle in question) to Puigcerda. Thence by autobus to Seo de Urgel. See the town.
5. Autobus to Escaldas. Spend the afternoon in Andorra-la-Viella.
6. Autobus to Encamp. If you can walk at all, proceed along the valley to Canillo.
7. Hire a mule at Andorra-la-Viella (or Escaldas) and ride to Massana and Ordino.
8. Autobus to Seo de Urgel, connecting with that to Puigcerda. Cross to Bourg Madame.
9. Light railway to Mont Louis. You may here hire a carriage to drive to Font Romeu or the forest lakes.
10. Light railway to Perpignan. (Or char-à-banc to Carcassonne via Quillan.)
11. Carcassonne.
12 and 13. Paris and London.

You need not hurry quite so fast as this, of course; I have merely indicated the most interesting points that can be reached by ordinary services on road or rail. A detour to Barcelona may be made from Perpignan or Puigcerda.

The new road from Seo de Urgel has made Andorra accessible to motorists, and many English cars have made the journey. Here is the itinerary of a friend of mine who had the honour of driving the first "Baby Austin" into Andorra, to the intense surprise of the inhabitants.

ROUTE F.

1 to 6. The approach to the Pyrenees, via Boulogne, Versailles (avoiding Paris), Orléans, Gueret, Cahors, Montauban, and Toulouse. You can do this journey in

much shorter time, if you wish, according to your energy and the power of your car. But the wise touring motorist never covers too much ground in a day.

7. Toulouse to Foix.
8. Foix to Ax-les-Thermes and the Puymorens Pass. (Leave Foix very early in the morning; alternatively, make Ax overnight.) Make the journey over the Embalire Pass to Soldeu, and return. Continue to Bourg Madame.
9. Via Puigcerda to Seo de Urgel. See previous comments on this road.
10. To Andorra-la-Viella and on to Encamp—the limit of the road. Stay the night at Escaldas. (You may, of course, stay whatever length of time you wish. We will allow three days in which to make the excursions on foot already described.)
14. Return to Bourg Madame via Seo de Urgel and Puigcerda.
15. Make a round tour from Bourg Madame via Saillagouse, Font Romeu, the Chaos of Targassone, and Ur, calling in at Llivia on the way back to Bourg Madame.
16. Via Mont Louis, Quillan, and Limoux to Carcassonne. (You can make this into two days' journey by travelling to Perpignan, via Prades, and thence to Carcassonne via the coastal road to Narbonne.)
17 to 22. Return to England via Lacaune, the Gorges of the Tarn, Le Mont-Dore, Vichy, Montarges, and Paris. This, of course, is a far more interesting trip than the outward journey.

I am not a motorist, but I can well believe that the trip is most interesting. Providing that one is not bound to the car, and is prepared to leave it occasionally to climb along unfrequented valleys, the journey should make a delightful holiday. Most of the passes, while exacting, are by no means impossible. (The Austin mounted them without a failure, but my friend is a

crack driver.) I would certainly recommend no one who is not really a good driver to attempt the Embalire Pass. There, a second's fluster or carelessness would mean disaster.

Part of the itinerary given above takes you along a section of the new Route des Pyrénées—a really wonderful road from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. If you have time you might do worse than to traverse this route from end to end. It will take you a week, but you pass through the varied scenery of the whole range.

So much for a very brief indication of the ways that lead towards Andorra. Now a word as to the means. You can do a fortnight's tour for about the same cost as an equivalent period at Margate. If you travel second class for long distances and third for short ones, and if you do not make for the most expensive hotel when you strike a large town, you can cover any of the itineraries A, B, or C for less than twenty pounds ; this is calculated with the franc at about 125. The cost of living in the out-of-the-way towns and villages is absurdly cheap. At Bourg Madame my bill for dinner, bed, breakfast, and knapsack rations was 30 francs. At Escaldas the pension terms are 12 pesetas a day. At Porté you can live comfortably on 25 shillings a week.

You can save many shillings on the most expensive part of your tour—the rail journey—by an intelligent study of the *Continental Guide* and international finance. In these days of wobbling exchanges it is very often cheaper to take a ticket from London to the French port only, and there re-book in francs. You can find out

the difference in cost before you travel. If you are going for a set time, take a period excursion to Paris, and re-book from there. And here is a very important point. Take a third-class ticket to Paris—not second. You need have no fear of discomfort. The journey to the coast in an English third-class compartment is, of course, no hardship. Then, on most of the cross-Channel routes, second and third class are combined—in fact, there is no third class, so that such travellers are put with the second. On boarding the French train you have merely to take a seat in a second-class compartment and pay the small excess fare. This procedure will save you from ten to fifteen shillings on a return trip to Paris, according to the route. I am glad to hand out a piece of information like this, so that any of my readers who are dissatisfied with this book may get their money back in such a manner.

Once you get to the region, leave main lines and touring routes behind you—or, if you must follow them, go by the purely local services. I have referred to the autobus service of the wonderful Route des Pyrénées. If you can afford it, by all means travel in the very comfortable light chars-à-bancs and stay at the luxurious hotels. But I fancy that you could work the route quite well at about one-third the cost by a series of judicious hops, using local bus services, diligences, and occasionally a light railway. I know that I once covered a span of road by bus for 25 francs, whereas the charge for the same stretch by the advertised cars was 77 francs. I have never attempted to "jump" buses along the whole route, but I believe it could be done.

One of my readers might care to attempt it—I should be very interested to hear of the result.

When choosing a hotel, avoid those which employ touts—they are usually the worst or the most expensive, or both. If you strike a good hotel in one town, the landlord can almost invariably recommend a similar one at your next stopping-place. Or you can always ask a doctor or a lawyer. The French professional class has an uncanny gift for nosing out the very best accommodation at a reasonable price. I have never been badly recommended by a French professional man. In most of the villages, of course, your choice is limited—there is only the inn.

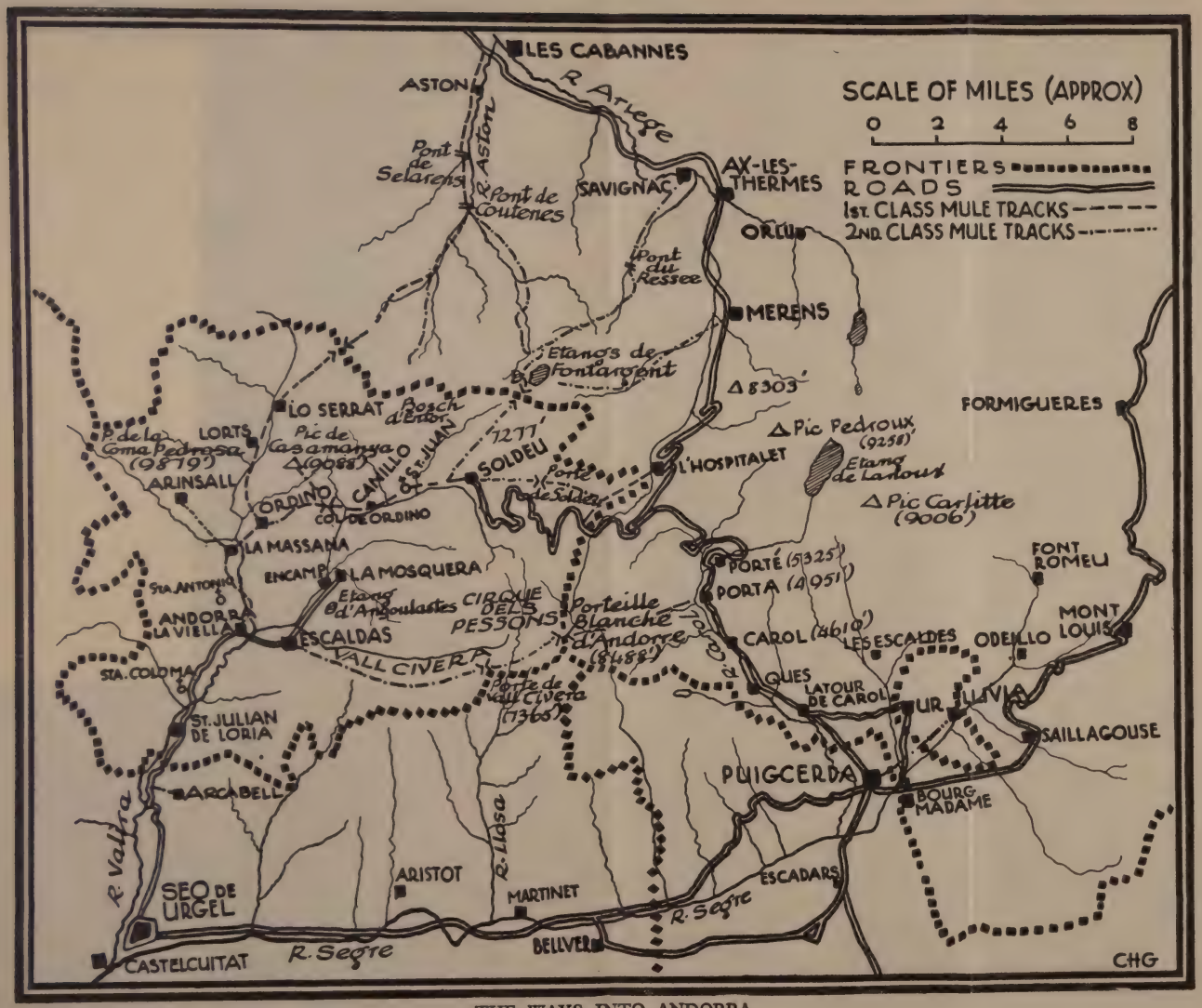
The best months to visit Andorra are from July to September. All the passes are free from snow at this time, and although the temperature is high, the heat is tempered by cool mountain winds. If you possibly can, spend much more time on the trip than my itineraries have indicated; otherwise your holiday will be an energetic one. You must be prepared for hard work and a little fatigue, but the result is worth all.

You need have no difficulty about language for purely practical purposes. You will find someone who speaks French in every village. A knowledge of Spanish is still more useful; and if you can pronounce your French as Spanish, you will be readily understood. At the Hôtel Pla, in Escaldas, you will find two young people who speak English—the only persons possessing this accomplishment in all Andorra.

You should choose your maps with care, since your safety may possibly depend upon them. As general

road maps, the Cartes Michelin are as good as any. For field tracks, the appropriate sections of the French military survey are very useful; the Spanish side of the range, unfortunately, is very inadequately mapped. Happily, a new map of Andorra itself has recently been published, and will be found of the greatest assistance to all visitors. It is the result of a private survey made by M. Marcel Chevalier, and is remarkably complete; it even gives contours, which are omitted from all other maps of the district, but which are invaluable. This new map is published by the Librairie Dardel of Chambéry, and may be obtained from Stanford's, Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

Set in the heart of the high mountains is this strange land of Andorra, of its kind the sole survivor of feudal days. Like its sons, the countenance of Andorra is not inviting at a first glance. A feeling of dreadful awe is a natural impulse among its sombre mountains. There is much to see, but you may walk the length and breadth of the land and see nothing at all. Abandon your superficial ideas as you march into Andorra. Get yourself imbued with a simplicity of mind and a clearness of outlook. Drop the veneer of civilization and be natural. Then you will see many things in Andorra.



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